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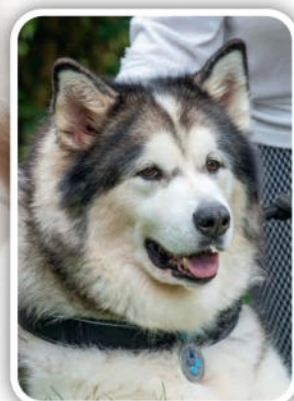


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Welcome.

There is lots to look forward to for dog lovers in March.

For starters, over the past few weeks, you'll have noticed that mornings and evenings are getting lighter, meaning more quality time for you and your dog and the opportunity for you both to witness the emergence of new life and growth as we head into spring. Of course, the icing on the cake is when the clocks go forward at the end of March and we can, hopefully, ditch the thermals!

Another great thing about March is Crufts. The world's greatest dog show runs from March 9 – 12 at the NEC, in Birmingham. With a packed schedule of all things dog-related, this year it will showcase the first full programme of events since before the pandemic.

Whether you go in person or decide to watch the action on TV, via the YouTube channel, or keep up with the latest news on social media, there's so much to enjoy — don't miss it. And remember, if you are coming along

to the NEC, pop over to the Your Dog stand to say hello and check out our latest show offers. We'll look forward to seeing you.

When you do get a spare moment this month, don't forget to check out all the great features we have in this issue — including an update on Crufts (page 34).

From 10 ways to have fun with your dog, to the inside story on your pet's incredible scenting abilities, why holidaying with your dog could be the best thing you ever do, and the start of a new series aimed at your active pet, there is plenty to stimulate your interest and keep you entertained — until next month when there will be another issue to look forward to!

Until then,

Janah Wright
Editor

★ ★ ★ WHO'S ON THE COVER THIS MONTH? ★ ★ ★



Cover pic: Jack Russell Terrier
by Mark Taylor, Warren
Photographic Ltd.

Our cover star this issue is long-haired Jack Russell Terrier Penny, from Guildford, Surrey, who was just 16 weeks old when this pic was taken.

Kevin Elliott, Penny's owner, says: "Penny loves nothing more than finding a willing person who'll let her snuggle up with them. If no one's available, she'll cuddle up to one of the other dogs. Due to her love of sleeping, she doesn't get much done in a day!

"When she is awake she loves trying to boss the other dogs around and pouncing on the cat.

"Due to her cuteness, she is often the centre of attention wherever she goes and she's happy to be admired by everyone. We must admit that she is a bit of a princess! But we wouldn't change her!"

IN THIS ISSUE



PAGE 14



PAGE 20



PAGE 34



PAGE 38

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful."

American advice columnist Ann Landers.

Contents

Discover what's inside this month...



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BECOME PART OF THE YOUR DOG MEMBERSHIP.
Turn to page 59 for our latest membership offer.

★ ON THE COVER

6 TALKING DOGS

Catch up on the latest dog-related news and chat.

10 10 WAYS TO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR DOG ★

Trainer and behaviourist Jackie Drakeford comes up with some suggestions that all of you will love.

14 YOUR DOG'S SUPER-SENSE! ★

We discover how and why your pet's sense of smell is so important to him.

18 A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES

Dogs' eyes can be very vulnerable as our vet, Vicky Payne, explains.

20 HOLIDAY MAGIC ★

Taking a holiday with your dog could be the ultimate bonding experience.

26 MY RIGHT-HAND MAN! ★

Charity Hearing Dogs for Deaf People has trained thousands of dogs to assist people with hearing loss. We find out more about these life-changing companions.

31 HAVE YOUR SAY!

Views, comments, and pictures from our readers and social media followers.

33 FREEBIES ★

We've got 20 fantastic prizes up for grabs this month.

34 LOOKING FORWARD TO CRUFTS ★

The countdown's begun — discover what you can look forward to at this year's show.

38 YOUR ACTIVE DOG ★

There's more to life with your dog than a stroll around the block, says animal scientist Jacqueline Boyd. Find out how you can exercise both body and brain in this new series.

42 THE HERO HOUND ★

Storm's story — the Alaskan Malamute who went above and beyond for his owners and won a prestigious award.

44 DOG SHOPPING

Check out some of the latest products for dog lovers and their pets.

46 JIM THE WONDER DOG

When it comes to extraordinary tales, few can equal those of Jim, a dog with many remarkable and unforgettable talents.

48 WHEN A STRANGER CALLS...

Many dogs feel stressed when visitors come to their homes, so how do you manage the situation and keep both dogs and visitors safe? Animal behaviourist Toni Shelbourne advises.

52 A GOOD READ

Take a breather, put your feet up, relax, and with your dog by your side enjoy some recent books, all with a canine theme.

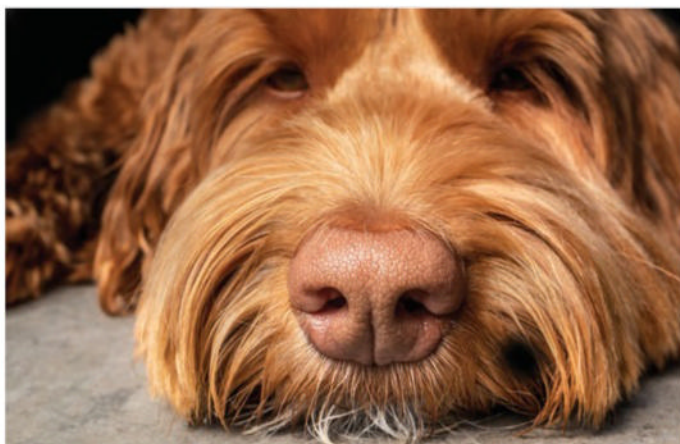
54 DOG ANSWERS

Any problems? The Your Dog experts are here to help with your dog-related queries and concerns about behaviour, training, health, and general care.

61 THE GALLERY

Readers' dogs get their five minutes of fame in our canine gallery.

**YOUR DOG'S
AMAZING SENSE
OF SMELL**
— page 14



HAPPY HOLIDAYS
— page 20



RIGHT: HEARING DOGS
— page 26
Image: Paul Wilkinson.

**BELOW LEFT:
A DOG IN A MILLION**
— page 46

Image: Courtesy of Missouri
State Archives and Friends of
Jim the Wonder Dog.

**BELOW RIGHT:
MANAGING
HOME VISITS**
— page 48



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Talking dogs

News. Chat. Interviews. Pictures. Competitions.

SUNNY SHINES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

A rescue dog, who lost his leg after being hit by a car in Bulgaria, has completed a virtual 100km race through Lapland to raise more than £430 for charity.

Sunny Sandwich, who was adopted four months ago from a Bulgarian shelter by Kat McGregor and Henry McGinty, tackled the mammoth walk around his home town of Bedford in aid of Myeloma UK, a charity dedicated to funding vital research into this incurable form of blood cancer.

It took the trio a month to complete the 'Lost in Lapland' challenge, which not only helped raise vital funds, but acted as physiotherapy by helping to strengthen Sunny's remaining three legs.

"Sunny made it!" exclaimed 29-year-old Kat, who works as Myeloma UK's scientific knowledge and communications officer. "Thank you so much to everyone who has donated already and to those who joined us on our walks, especially our four-legged friends, Freya and Paddy,

who spurred Sunny along.

"We've been so surprised and amazed by people's generosity. It's been really heart-warming."

The brave dog was found injured and starving by a nine-year-old girl and her mother, who named him Sunny Sandwich in Bulgarian because they thought his face was

golden like the sun and they fed him sandwiches all the way to the shelter.

"Sunny's such a sweet dog. When he smiles, it makes my heart burst," said Kat.

● **To support Sunny, Kat and Henry, visit <https://fundraise.myeloma.org.uk/fundraisers/katmcgregor/lost-in-lapland>**



Right: Sunny with his owner Kat McGregor.

SMOOTH OPERATORS

Dogs are more relaxed in electric — rather than diesel — cars, according to pioneering new research.

This first-of-its-kind study, undertaken by the University of Lincoln in association with multi-national online automotive marketplace CarGurus, investigated canine behaviour and welfare when travelling in an electric versus a diesel vehicle.

Results revealed that dogs did not settle as well in a diesel car and concluded that those who suffer from car sickness may feel better travelling in an electric vehicle.

"Until now, there were no studies on the effect of EVs on dogs," explained the University of Lincoln's professor of veterinary behavioural medicine, Daniel Mills, who led the study.

"Our results clearly show that dogs seem to be more relaxed in EVs, particularly when looking at behavioural traits such as restlessness."



Right: Dogs seem more relaxed in EVs.

DOG DATA

According to Rainwalk Pet Insurance's analysis of Google trends data, searches for 'Is my dog happy?' are 451.16 per cent — or six times — more popular than 'Is my kid happy?'

WATCH OUT FOR SMALL OBJECTS LEFT AROUND THE HOME, URGE VETS

The team at a Cambridgeshire-based veterinary referral centre is reminding owners to take extra precautions to prevent their pets swallowing everyday items, after vets removed batteries, children's toys, underwear, stones, and bones from dogs' stomachs.

Ferran Valls Sanchez, head of internal medicine at Dick White Referrals in Six Mile Bottom, explained: "People would be amazed at some of the items our team has recovered from inside dogs.

"Out and about, dogs can pick up anything in a split second — it could be a piece of toxic human food, like chocolate or chewing gum, or debris from takeaways, such as chicken bones, which can splinter."

He suggested owners keep dogs that like to scavenge on the lead or consider using a muzzle to prevent them picking up anything off the pavement. "For persistent scavengers, you may also want to work with a dog trainer or behaviourist to break the habit," he said.

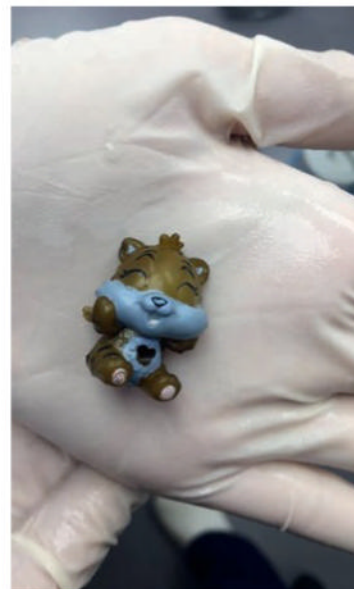
Ferran added that dogs are just as likely to scavenge around the home, snaffling small objects such as coins off the coffee table or the contents of the bathroom bin.

If the worst comes to the worst and you suspect your dog has swallowed something he shouldn't, Ferran advises taking him straight to the vet, as prompt action can mean the item is more likely to be removed via minimally invasive methods.



Right: The X-ray reveals a children's toy.

Far right: Toys like this are often ingested.



SEEING EYE TO EYE

A young Labrador's vision has been saved, thanks to the combined expertise of ophthalmology teams at two leading veterinary specialists.

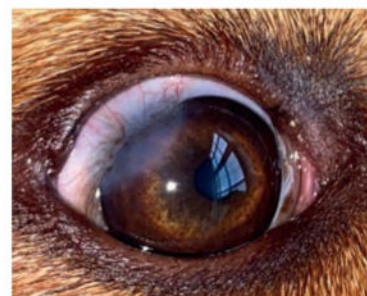
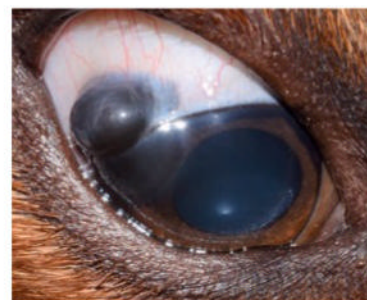
Linnaeus-owned London Veterinary Specialists and Hertfordshire-based Davies joined forces to successfully remove a fast-growing

melanoma from Connie's right eye.

"The mass was approximately 10mm in diameter and due to the rate at which it was growing, we needed to perform surgery promptly to save Connie's eye," explained ophthalmologist Ioannis Tzouganakis.

Connie underwent a microsurgical procedure under general anaesthetic to remove the mass before the site was repaired with a corneal transplant (xenograft), which was stitched onto the surface of the eye using hair-thin sutures.

Connie's owner, Pip Allen, from London, added: "Ioannis not only saved Connie's eye, but we honestly cannot tell there has been such a huge surgical intervention. We will be forever grateful to the team."



Right: Connie had a fast-growing melanoma on her right eye.

Far right above: Connie's eye before her op.

Far right below: After surgery and recovery.





Top: Pet theft update from home security company ADT.

Above: The Biscuit team.

News Hound-up

● STATS NAME NORTHUMBERLAND AS UK DOG THEFT HOTSPOT

Research from home security company ADT has revealed Northumberland as the UK's dog theft hotspot.

The data, compiled from police forces across the country, showed that the region has recorded 437 stolen dogs since 2017.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, Gwent in South Wales is one of the safest areas in the country for dogs, with no thefts recorded by Gwent Police over the last five years.

The Staffordshire Bull Terrier is the most commonly stolen breed, according to the figures.

● TAKING THE BISCUIT

An innovative pet-care app, which makes it easier and more rewarding for owners to improve their dog's health and well-being, is celebrating its first birthday.

Biscuit Pet Care has enabled UK owners to earn £150,000 in its first nine months. The app awards points as 'biscuits' for walking dogs plus engaging in other well-being elements, such as providing flea and worming treatments. Users can exchange their biscuits, in real time, for reward vouchers and offers. With more than 30 reward partners on board, Biscuit is the only pet well-being app to partner with national brands such as Adidas, John Lewis, Waitrose, and Tesco.

The Biscuit app is available to download free on iOS and android devices.

● STRICKEN TERRIER LIFTED 50FT TO SAFETY

Terrified terrier Roxy was saved by Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue and North Yorks Fire

& Rescue teams after falling down a 50ft ravine.

The two-year-old dog fell down the vertical crag in North Yorkshire with her owner, who managed to escape, after chasing a squirrel.

Rescuers spent more than three hours using specialist animal rescue equipment in the dark, fog, and rain to winch the Patterdale Terrier to safety.

After being tempted by dog treats, Roxy was eventually recovered uninjured.

● EXERCISE HELPS LOWER RISK OF CANINE AND HUMAN DEMENTIA, SAYS RESEARCH

An American study has revealed that walking lowers the risk of dementia in dogs.

According to data from the University of Washington's Dog Aging Project, published in Nature Scientific Reports, exercise seems to protect both canine and human brains.

Researchers studied more than 15,000 companion dogs and found that 1.4 per cent were classed as having canine cognitive dysfunction — doggy dementia. The odds of the condition increased 52 per cent with each passing year and were six times higher in inactive dogs.

● MIGHTY MAX'S LEGACY LIVES ON

The Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) has a new emergency vehicle, after Miracle Dog Max, Cumbria's canine social media star, raised £120,000 before his death last April.

The Springer Spaniel gained worldwide fame when videos of his walks in the Lake District with his owner Kerry Irving and canine companions, Paddy and Harry, went viral.

The new Volvo XC90 rapid response vehicle will boast Max's paw print.



Right: Max's canine companions, Paddy and Harry, with the rapid response vehicle.

Far right: The rapid response vehicle features Max's paw print.



World Pupdates

● **AMERICA:** California is the first state in the US to ban cruel and unnecessary toxicity testing for pesticides, chemical substances, and other products on cats and dogs, after Governor Gavin Newsom signed several measures, including Senator Scott Wiener's SB 879, the PET (Prohibiting Extraneous Testing) Act.

● **CHILE:** A kind-hearted train driver in Santiago went to extraordinary lengths to rescue a stray dog on the line.

Instead of calling authorised personnel to remove the dog, he stopped the train, descended onto the tracks and lifted the dog to safety himself.

He then apologised over the public address system but added that he couldn't run over the dog. His announcement was met with applause from the train's passengers.

DOG DATA
In a survey on bad bedroom habits in the UK, www.pizunalinens.com found that 57 per cent of people allow their pets to sleep on their pillows.

Right: The Pekingese is one of the breeds expected to take part.

CALLING OWNERS OF FLAT-FACED DOGS

Owners of brachycephalic breeds are being asked to take part in research aimed at improving the health and welfare of future generations of flat-faced dogs.

Funded by The Kennel Club, scientists at the University of Cambridge's Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome (BOAS) Research Group are inviting owners of 13 breeds to participate in the project to investigate how far different dogs may be affected by breathing problems, and to identify any risk factors involved.

In addition, the BOAS Research Group is also investigating the internal anatomy of different brachycephalic breeds for a separate study. Dogs should be aged four or older, require dental treatment, and must not have previously had airway surgery. Free dental treatment, including scale/polish and extractions, is on offer for dogs

admitted to the Queen's Veterinary School Hospital in Cambridge.

If you own an Affenpinscher, Boston Terrier, Boxer, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Chihuahua, Dogue de Bordeaux, Griffon Bruxellois, Japanese Chin, King Charles Spaniel, Maltese, Pekingese, Pomeranian, or Shih Tzu, and would like to get

involved in either study, email brachystudy@vet.cam.ac.uk

● **The UK Brachycephalic Working Group of veterinary organisations, The Kennel Club, scientific and social researchers, and breed clubs, has committed to a five-year strategy to improve the health and welfare of flat-faced dogs.**



Above: The need for Pet Aid has rocketed in Scotland.

NEED FOR PET AID IN SCOTLAND SPIRALS

Demand for the Scottish SPCA's Pet Aid initiative, which supports owners struggling to care for their animals, has skyrocketed due to the continuing cost-of-living crisis.

The scheme provides essential supplies through a network of food banks across most of Scotland.

In addition, the charity has seen calls to its helpline from struggling owners treble compared to the previous year.

"On top of this, we have seen a 77 per cent increase in people calling to rehome an animal, an 84 per cent increase in the number of people our helpline is giving advice to, and a 24 per cent increase in people assisted directly by a visit from the SSPCA," explained the charity's CEO Kirsteen Campbell.

"To help combat this increase, the number of foodbanks/community larders working with Pet Aid has doubled in just four months from 16 to 33 and we are aiming to have at least 48 Pet Aid volunteers supporting our work across Scotland by the end of December 2023."

● **Food donations can be dropped into any of the SSPCA's animal rescue and rehoming centres daily between 1pm and 4pm. Visit www.scottishspca.org/pet-aid for a full list of foodbanks where Pet Aid is available.**

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10 ways to have fun with your dog

One of the best aspects of dog ownership is having fun together. Trainer and behaviourist **Jackie Drakeford** shares some ideas that can help make both of you feel good.



Above right: You and your dog can have fun together.

Above left: A roll in fox poo is hard to resist for many dogs!

It's important that what you think of as fun is also what your dog finds fun. Similarly, there are things that dogs enjoy that aren't so great for us (rolling in fox poo, for example!) and part of your relationship relies on keeping those moments to a minimum. You should also remember that dogs are not identical in mind any more than they are physically, and what one thinks is the greatest fun is not the same for all.

There is breed bias in this: for instance, sight hounds love tearing about and often run for several hundred yards for the pure pleasure of running back again, while collies like to stay really close to their owners so they don't miss anything they might be about to do. Some dogs are social butterflies, while others prefer just to be with you. Let's have a look at some fun things that you can do together.

Right: Agility is popular with both dogs and owners.

TOP TIP!
Research the work your dog's breed/type was originally bred to do, and you'll have a good idea of what he finds fulfilling.

Dogs age faster than we do, so take care not to miss any early signs of unsoundness during energetic exercise. By switching to gentler activities, you can have just as much fun.

“...sight hounds love tearing about...”

1 Agility: Dogs are tremendous athletes, even the cute small ones with short legs, and most will enjoy negotiating obstacles if introduced to them appropriately. Agility clubs can provide a safe outlet for their energy and a social event for their handlers, but not all dogs or people thrive in the excitement and competitiveness of organised agility, and high noise levels from both people and dogs can be upsetting for some. In these cases, agility at home will fulfil the sense of achievement gained by climbing, jumping, going through a tunnel, and negotiating weave poles, with no pressure or over-stimulus. You and your dog can miss out any obstacles he dislikes, start and stop when he feels ready, and — so important — always leave him wanting more.

2 Hoopers: This is the low-impact version of agility, and can suit dogs better if they are older, smaller, or lack confidence about the greater challenges



posed by certain obstacles. For the more competitive, competition is included, with chances to progress to champion status. And, of course, you can take away the ideas for exercises and use them at home if you prefer.

3 Scentsational: Dogs just love to follow scent, and you can have a lot of fun by laying trails for them to follow in the garden. Fill up a spray bottle with water and add something smelly that dogs find enticing, such as a piece of pate, liver (raw or cooked), or Bovril. Shake well, and leave a squirt every few feet at dog level. A tasty treat to discover every now and then, with a 'jackpot' of treats to mark the end of the trail, will give your dog a sense of achievement. Start with your dog on a long line and walk round with him, giving him plenty of time to work out what this exercise is all about. It's his job to follow the trail, but you can share his delight as he looks at you to tell you that this is such fun. Start with short, easy trails and frequent treats, or some of his daily food if you are watching his weight, and you can progress to longer trails that criss-cross each other and are at varying heights as he becomes more competent. You can dispense with the lead and leave fewer treats after the first few times, but continue to walk round with him as this gives him extra pleasure from your teamwork.

There are formal groups where your dog can do scent work to competitive level, or even progress to Search and Rescue, which requires a lot of commitment and a certain size of dog, as the work can be strenuous. Alternatively, you can carry on with scent work at home together, which is something that can be done with any dog and most owners at any stage of life.

Above: Dogs love to scent.

Right: Take the opportunity to bond with your pet.





Above: Collies like to stay close, wondering what you're going to do next.

Right: A spaniel and a Labrador enjoy some gundog training.



“Even if your dog doesn’t have a smidgen of gundog in his ancestry, it’s worth trying. I know a lot of terriers who really blossom by learning the skills gundogs need.”

5 Fun at home: When the weather is challenging, you can make puzzle toys at home, such as filling a cardboard box with crumpled newspaper and hiding a few tasty treats for your dog to find. Cardboard tubes from loo rolls and kitchen paper can also be stuffed with scrunched-up newspaper, a few pieces of which hold a treat hidden inside. Keep the treats very small, and vary them to increase the incentive.

6 Easy yet rewarding: The three-cup game is another indoor exercise that is cheap, easy, and rewarding. With your dog in another room, place a tiny treat under a paper cup or a small plastic flowerpot, then call him in and encourage him to knock over the cup and enjoy the treat. Progress to several cups, but with the treat under only one of them. This is easy to set up and clear away, with the bonus of reinforcing the ‘stay’ and ‘come’ commands as well.

7 Strenuous exercise: Many dogs love swimming, but you need to be careful to keep your pet safe. Beware of water containing harmful algae, dumped rubbish, or other contaminants, and don’t let your dog chase the ducks! If you walk on the beach, make sure he doesn’t set off for France, and remember that even if his recall is great, he may not be able to hear you over the sound of the tide. Ice is dangerous, so never let your dog go anywhere near it. Hydrotherapy pools offer an alternative if you are unsure of your local area, and remember that a few minutes of swimming provides more strenuous exercise than a same-length walk.



TOP TIP!
If you have several dogs, one-to-one time is precious to them. Even though you lead a busy life, you will give much joy by fitting in an activity that is just for each individual.

4 Gundog training: This is something I recommend for any dog/owner combination who would like to learn something fun in a group environment. Some trainers only work with pedigree gundogs, but others are happy to take cross-breeds — did you know that Poodles are gundogs too, so all the fashionable Poodle-crosses will enjoy learning these skills? Take time to find the right trainer, and if possible, attend a session or two without your dog so that you can see if he will be a good fit. Even if your dog doesn’t have a smidgen of gundog in his ancestry, it’s worth trying. I know a lot of terriers who really blossom by learning the skills gundogs need.

It may be that your dog doesn’t like loud bangs, and in that case many trainers will obligingly offer one-to-one sessions that don’t include them but still offer other exercises. Gundog training is big on teaching dogs steadiness and self-control, with the reward of searching out and retrieving dummies. If your dog doesn’t like retrieving, and many don’t, you can still delight him by hiding suitable items in the garden and around the home for him to sniff out. Canvas dummies are pleasant for dogs to carry, and you can add a tiny smear of something smelly such as cheese or meat paste to encourage the ‘find’. Some of the more modern training dummies mimic the look of game birds, and most dogs find them very appealing.

Right: If you’re unsure where to swim locally, try contacting a hydrotherapy pool.



Above: Try some running.

Above right: Sight hounds love to run.



8 Stepping up the pace: Dogs really enjoy running with their handlers, so if this is an activity you enjoy as well, going for a proper run across country can leave you both happy and well exercised. Some serious runners like to have their dogs attached to their waistbands, and can go that bit faster with the dogs helping, while others prefer their dogs to be off-lead but close.

You need to train some basics before you go out for a proper run, so you avoid getting tripped up by an enthusiastic canine companion, and also be considerate of other path users who might find the prospect of a fast-running dog and human coming towards them rather daunting.

9 Walkies: Go walking somewhere new! A change of scene is stimulating for dog and owner, so even though your usual walks are happy and fulfilling, your dog will love all the new scents and scenes that unfold as you explore.

10 Perfect for bonding: Fun doesn't have to be energetic. If you learn how to massage, you can create a really bonding experience with your dog. Your hands can detect any change in his bodily condition at an early stage, and he will benefit from the closeness between you. Some dogs will initiate massage once they get the idea, and many will croon their pleasure as your hands ease any aches or pains.

TOP TIP!
When giving treats as rewards, keep them very small. It isn't the size of the treat that counts, but the fact that it is being given at all. This way you can reward all you want without ending up with a fat dog!



Right: Discover new walks together.



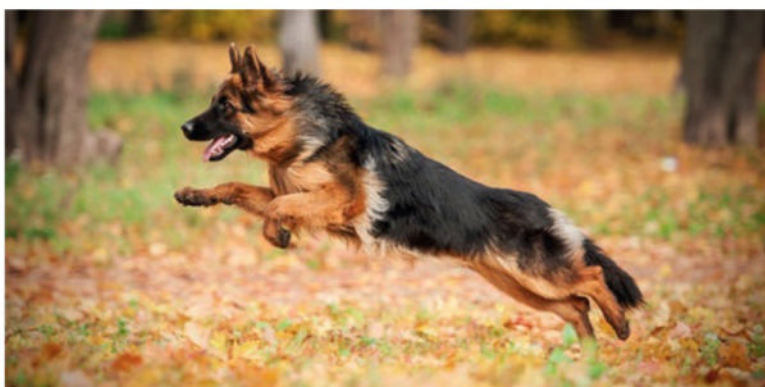
Your dog's SUPER-SENSE!

There's no doubt about it — smell is hugely important to dogs. **Karen Bush** takes a closer look at how your dog's incredible nose works.

Top: Your dog's nose is incredible!

Right: German Shepherds are super sniffers...

Below: ...but the Bloodhound takes the top spot!



Right from the start, scent plays a very important part in your dog's life. Research even suggests that puppies begin developing and using their sense of smell while still in the womb. Certainly, they are born with it and, blind and deaf until two or three weeks old, they use smell along with touch to help them find their mother and her milk.

As the pups grow, so too does the importance of scent, becoming a huge part of how they experience the world; if vision is our primary sense, smell is certainly your dog's. So, it's well worth taking a closer look at how his nose works, and thinking about ways in which you can help him enjoy his fantastic super-sense to the utmost.

"The nostrils (or nares) can wiggle independently, which helps pick up on scents coming from different directions."



Right: Scent is a very important part of your dog's life.



“...puppies begin using their sense of smell while still in the womb.”

DID YOU KNOW?

The long, drooping ears, which many sight hounds possess, are thought to help collect scent from the air and keep it close to the nose and face. Many sight hounds also have loose, moist lips, which are also said to help in trapping scent particles.

SMELLING IN STEREO

Whether pink, black, brown, blue, or spotted, the rhinarium — the hairless part of your dog's nose which you can see (sometimes called the nose leather) — is where the smell adventures start. It's a marvel of design in itself, and not just because every nasal pattern is as unique to each dog as fingerprints are to humans.

The nostrils (or nares) can wiggle independently of each other, which helps pick up on scents coming from different directions. They also each sample air separately, so in effect your dog smells in stereo. When investigating certain scents, the left one may be used for familiar and likeable odours such as food, and the right one for arousing or threatening odours.

When your dog sniffs, air is inhaled through the round nostrils at the front of his nose, but when he breathes out, it leaves through the slits to the side. This means that he retains the inhaled scent rather than blowing it straight back out, and the tiny air currents created by the exhale actually help pull more of it in, helping to concentrate it.

Smells are collected either by air-scenting, taking long sniffs, or when it is closer or on the ground, by increasing the sniff speed to maximise it. The average dog inhales around 30ml of air per sniff, and may sniff at a rate of around five to seven sniffs per second.

The nostrils are just the tip of the iceberg: behind them, the long muzzle contains a labyrinthine scroll-like bony structure of

turbinates. These create a large surface area for the epithelium covering them, which contains scent-detecting cells.

Humans have around five million scent receptors, which sounds impressive until compared to a Beagle or German Shepherd, who both have around 225 million receptors.

Top of the table though is the Bloodhound with an astonishing 300 million receptors.

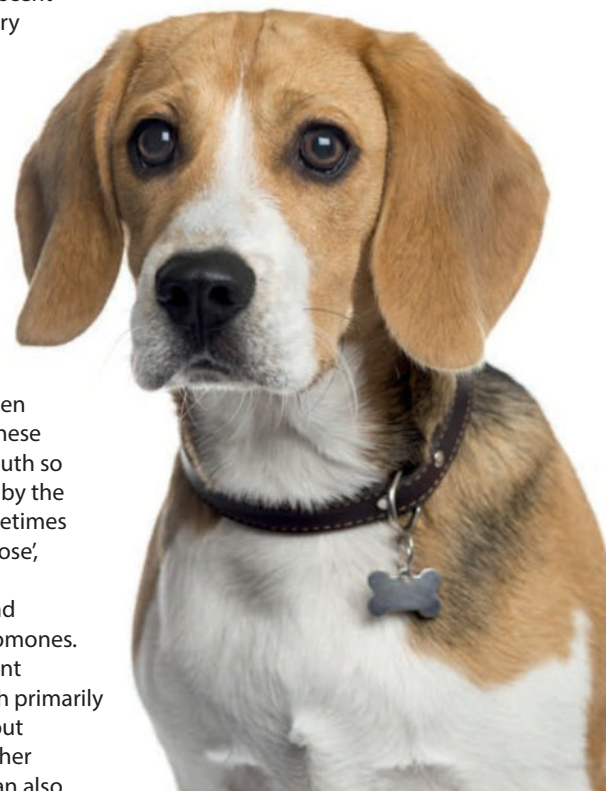
Not surprisingly, a large portion of your dog's brain is dedicated to analysing what all those odours picked up by the scent receptors are; the olfactory bulb is proportionally 40 times bigger than ours. Dogs also have an excellent olfactory memory, and once a scent is processed will remember it indefinitely.

SECOND NOSE

The damp surface of the nose helps scent particles to stick to it. When your dog licks his nose, these are transferred to the mouth so they can be investigated by the vomeronasal organ. Sometimes referred to as a 'second nose', this is located just above the roof of the mouth, and specifically detects pheromones. Pheromones are important chemical messages which primarily transmit information about readiness to mate and other sex-related details, but can also

convey other information, such as aggression, fear, or comfort. A well-known example of this is the dog-appeasing pheromone that a mother produces three – five days after giving birth, which reassures her puppies and gives them a sense of well-being, safety, and security. The synthetic versions commercially available can be helpful when youngsters are settling into new homes, and also appear to promote calmness and reduce anxiety during times of stress in adult dogs.

Sometimes a lick of the nose isn't quite enough, and you'll see your



Right: The Beagle has around 225 million scent receptors.

DID YOU KNOW?

Along with touch, smell declines more slowly than the other senses as your dog ages; you may find that as a result your senior dog becomes more obsessed with sniffing while out and about.

dog wrinkling his nose after sniffing something (such as a puddle of urine). Alternatively, he might look as though he's grimacing, or he may chatter his teeth — all ways of drawing more pheromones into his mouth for analysis by the vomeronasal organ.

He may even be more direct and actually lap at the puddle — he's not being disgusting, he's just gathering information.

MY DOG DOESN'T SMELL

Sniffing is such a major part of your dog's life that if you notice a lack of interest in scenting, take a closer look at him as it may indicate a health issue. A decrease or loss of smell may occur for a number of reasons, including pain or discomfort, inability to lower the head and neck to sniff, upper respiratory problems, a blow on the head damaging the olfactory nerve,

chemotherapy treatment, and gastric issues.

NICE TO NOSE YOU

"When a dog approaches a person, it's rarely an invitation for body contact, although frequently misinterpreted as a request or permission for that person to interact," said Sarah Fisher, founder of Animal Centred Education, which often incorporates scent into its learning methods. "When given the choice to approach someone at their own pace, dogs will often sniff that person's shoe or leg, or hang back and scent the air, then move away. Think of this important scent gathering process as the dog deciding if he would like that person's phone number so he can start a conversation, rather than it being an invitation for a full-blown date."

If you have a dog who is overexuberant or aroused when you have visitors, Sarah suggests letting the dog's nose get to work. "Some dogs become really excited when familiar humans come to visit, particularly if those people are meaningful to them, and may jump up and/or take the person's clothing or arm in their mouth. Giving a dog a toy to hold may meet the needs of some dogs but not others. Help reduce arousal around your visitor by asking them to bring something safe for the dog to carry, or shred, that bears their scent. It might be the sleeve of an old sweatshirt, an old pillow case knotted to minimise the risk of the dog tripping, a small towel or an old cloth napkin. Ask your guest to carry it close for a little while prior to arrival. Giving it to the dog provides him with the opportunity to obtain olfactory information without the need for him to lick or mouth the visitor to gather that important scent, and if he wants, he also has something meaningful to carry.

"If you have multiple visitors coming at the same time you can create a snuffle bag, asking each



Right: Sniffing on a walk is a hugely rewarding activity for dogs.

Below: Once a scent has been processed, your dog will remember it.



"When a dog approaches a person, it's rarely an invitation for body contact..."



Right: Nothing beats a good sniff!

visitor to place their scent gift in the bag, which you can then offer to your dog. This gives him the chance to explore all the scents in his own time without having to approach each person to gather this vitally important information."

● **Find out more about Animal Centred Education at animalcentrededucation.co.uk and on Facebook at ACE Connections.**

FUN WITH SMELLS

Given the importance of smell to dogs, it makes sense to incorporate it into games with your companion. You can hide food in special doggy puzzles and interactive toys and snuffle mats, but it's even more fun when you join in the games with your dog.

Try tossing a treat for him to find while out on a walk, varying the direction, and as he gets better, the distance. You can do something similar at home; put your dog outside or in a different room, while you hide some treats.

Put them in accessible places, but at a variety of heights, such as on the seat of a chair as well as on the floor, before letting him in and encouraging him to sniff out all the goodies.

Right: Incorporate your dog's super-sense in some of his games.

"And if he struggles with travelling in the car, try ditching the pongy air fresher..."

NASAL INSULT

Think twice when considering whether your dog really needs a bath. Quite apart from his sensitive nose finding the fragrance of some grooming products overpowering, every hair follicle on his body is associated with pheromone-releasing apocrine glands. Their secretions coat the fur, producing an odour signal individual to him and recognisable to other dogs — or at least until you remove it, even if only temporarily, which could explain the frantic rolling on rugs or grass afterwards!

There can also be other onslaughts on your dog's olfactory senses, such as plug-in scented diffusers and essential oil burners around the home. If you must use them, leave the door of the room open so your dog can move away if he wishes. And if he struggles with travelling in the car, try ditching the pongy air fresher dangling from your rear-view mirror!



A sight for sore eyes

From working Gundogs to brachycephalic breeds, many dogs suffer problems with their vulnerable eyes, as **Vicky Payne** explains.



ABOUT VICKY

Holistic vet Vicky Payne BVetMed MRCVS is based in East Sussex, and qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2001. She uses a range of complementary therapies alongside conventional medicine and surgery.



Above: Working dogs can be more susceptible to eye injuries when they race through the undergrowth.

Every vet has their favourite cases to treat — and ones they would rather avoid! I'm afraid that at university I was bored to sleep by slides of retinal problems, and injured eyes made me a little squeamish, but since getting involved in breeding dogs and handling many injured eyes, they are no longer my Achilles heel!

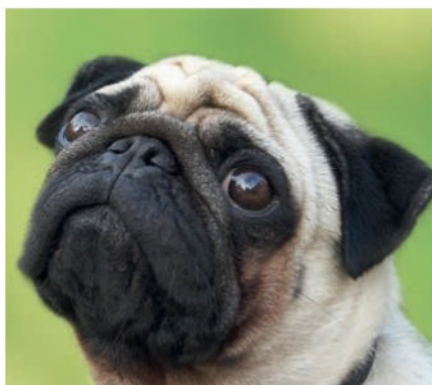
I have a lot of working Gundog clients, so the autumn and winter see a steady procession of spaniels and Labradors with eye injuries, a result of running at high speed through the brambles. If the eye is very sore, I apply some local anaesthetic before using a dye to look for scratches and ulcers. In most cases a course of antibiotic and lubricating eye drops, and some pain relief, sees these heal quickly. Sometimes the injuries are

more severe, and my own dogs have given me two of the biggest scares. Rebus followed a rabbit into a hedge and managed to poke a blackthorn into his eye and right into the lens! A trip to my friendly veterinary ophthalmologist saw him checked out and sent home with antibiotics and eye flush, and he healed with just a small mark on his cornea and lens.

Gadget also needed the help of my ophthalmologist friend when she speared her cornea with a sharp bit of weed. I was unable to remove this myself as it required tiny instruments, magnification, and a very steady hand! I recommend that working dog owners carry an eye wash in their dog first aid kit to flush dust and seeds from the eyes, but if the eye is closed, red, or the pupils don't match, seek veterinary help immediately.

On the other end of the activity spectrum but with their own set of eye problems are the brachycephalic breeds. We also have a lot of Pugs, French Bulldogs, and Bulldogs on our books. At puppy checks I advise on eye care and many of my patients receive lubricating drops every day to reduce the risk of eye problems. Brachycephalic dogs are at risk of eye damage because their globes are more prominent, their eyelids don't always close fully during blinking, there are differences

“I have a lot of working Gundog clients, so the autumn and winter see a steady procession of spaniels and Labradors with eye injuries...”



Above left:
Brachycephalic dogs
are at a higher risk of
eye damage.



Above right: Special
dog goggles can
protect your pet's eyes.

in how their eyes heal, and they have reduced sensation in the cornea.

Poppy the Pug was a regular visitor for the treatment of eye ulcers and showed classic dark pigment on her corneas from chronic eye irritation. Sadly, one ulcer failed to respond to treatment and ruptured so we had no choice but to remove her eye (an operation called enucleation).

SAVING THE OTHER EYE

Poppy recovered well and got the nickname Popeye, but her owners were frantic with worry when a few months later she developed a deep ulcer in her other eye. This time we moved fast to try to save her remaining eye by supporting the cornea with a graft of conjunctival skin. The fiddly surgery was successful, and we saved Poppy's eye. She now wears Doggles when out on a walk.

Another patient in Doggles is Finn, a German Shepherd-cross with a condition called pannus, which is aggravated by UV light. Finn has steroid drops for when his condition flares up but wearing doggy sunglasses when he goes out has reduced the frequency of attacks.

Below: If you have any
concerns about your
dog's eyes, get your vet
to check him over.

Most of the cases that are booked in as 'red eye' or 'swollen eye' are simple conjunctivitis cases, but not always. A bulging painful eye with redness could be glaucoma or an infection or tumour behind the eye. We always see eye problems as soon as possible. Lumps near the eyes of older pets are usually warty growths or cysts and these sometimes need surgical removal.

In young dogs, especially Bulldogs and Mastiffs, I am more likely to see a cherry eye, a prolapsed tear gland. Initial treatment is aimed at soothing and lubricating the gland, but most affected dogs need surgery to replace it. I have had breeders ask for the gland to be removed or tell me that their 'Bulldog vet' cuts them out for £20, but removal of a tear gland is a last resort as it leaves the dog needing eye drops several times a day for life.

Some eye disorders, including retinal problems, glaucoma, and cataracts can be inherited so responsible dog breeders will have their dogs' eyes assessed by an eye specialist once a year.

When looking for a new puppy, check whether eye tests are recommended for the breed and if they are, ask to see a copy of the most recent test result.

The eye panellists look at the back of the eye (the retina) and the lens, as well as checking the shape of the eyelids as in-turned (entropion) and out-turned (ectropion) eyelids can irritate the eye surface. Some breeds have an additional test called gonioscopy every three years, which assesses their risk of one type of glaucoma.

**“Rebus followed
a rabbit into a hedge
and managed to poke
a blackthorn into his eye
and right into the lens!”**



Holiday magic

Why taking a holiday with your dog could be the perfect bonding experience.

With so many dog-friendly attractions and places to stay these days, taking your canine companion with you on holiday is the perfect opportunity to spend quality time together, and of course, you'll be able to enjoy

Below: Spend some quality time together.

a guilt-free vacation, without worrying about whether your dog is pining for you.

Holidaying with your pet can also be cheaper than paying for a home-sitter or a stay in kennels, and the money saved can be spent on special treats for you both.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Whether it's doing your own thing, trying something new, or polishing up your dog's existing skills, there's a holiday to suit pretty well everyone. A tailored dogcentric break might offer activities such as agility, obedience and rally,

"...remember that this is a holiday you are sharing with your dog, so take his likes and dislikes into account as well as your own..."





Above: Prior to your holiday, take a few trips to popular places locally to get your dog used to busy towns and villages.

TOP TIP!

Make sure you keep a close eye on your dog's paws — pads may get more wear and tear and can become sore.

hoopers, scenting, or treibball, with time factored in to relax and explore local walks as well. Perhaps striking out on a long distance walk is what appeals to you, or maybe simply taking things at a leisurely pace, enjoying the opportunity to discover new walks and attractions, is more your style?

Whatever you choose, remember that this is a holiday you are sharing with your dog, so take his likes and dislikes into account as well as your own, and choose the sort of break you will both enjoy.

FIT FOR FUN?

It's likely that your dog will be getting a lot more exercise while on holiday than he does at home, when walks have to be squeezed into the working day. When he's having fun he's unlikely to pace himself and may overdo things. Being out and about for most of the time every day can be very different to doing bigger walks at weekends only, with your dog having the following week to recover! Longer walks, maybe more challenging terrain, and even having fun doing a spot of swimming, can all lead to aches, strains, and possibly injury unless you've put in a little advance preparation.

Ask your vet to give your dog a pre-holiday health check if necessary, and start getting him into shape, ensuring he isn't overweight and increasing his stamina and fitness. Your vet should be able to give you advice on how to go about this.

Case study

"THEY'RE FAMILY, SO WHY WOULD WE LEAVE THEM BEHIND?"

Sarah Whiffen is an ACE (Animal Centred Education) instructor, TTouch practitioner, and certified Treat Retreat trainer. She and her partner Paul, who are based in Buckinghamshire, have been taking holidays with their dogs for the last 17 years. They currently have two dogs.

"For us, part of the holiday is about being able to spend more time with them, going to places and having fun together," said Sarah. "They're family, so why would we leave them behind? They are such fun on holiday, enjoying it as much as we do, and it makes lots of special memories.

"Cornwall is our favourite destination, and we usually go around the end of September when any beach restrictions are lifted and the weather isn't too hot for them either. Over the years we've developed a tradition of visiting a particular beach on our first full day there; the dogs seem to know exactly where we're going — there is such joy on their faces, and excitement when their paws touch the sand.

"It's important to be prepared for anything though," Sarah added. "You can't always guarantee the weather, so take plenty of towels for drying wet dogs, and when booking ask if there is a tumble dryer! We also take spare leads and harnesses; and as holiday rental properties often have easy-to-clean but slippery floor surfaces we also take along runners we can lay down. They don't take up much extra space when packing, and ensure that the dogs have good footing so there is less risk of strains or injury.

"And always check the garden! Two of the dogs gave us a few minutes of panic once when they managed to find an escape route into the next door garden, wriggling through a small hole we hadn't spotted in some shrubbery. A garden, which someone accustomed to bigger dogs such as Labradors may consider secure, isn't necessarily secure for a tiny terrier who can squeeze through gaps or nimbly scale a stone wall that offers handy toe holds."



Case study above right: Sarah with Betty.

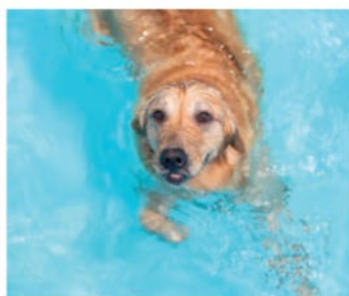
Case study right: Loving the beach and pictured from the top clockwise: Sam Whiskers, Linus, Orson, and Betty.

TOP TIP!

If your holiday is going to include swimming, don't make it your dog's first experience of taking a dip.

Book some swimming lessons at a canine hydro pool so you can ensure he has a gentle and safe introduction and doesn't panic if he finds himself out of his depth.

Make a list of anything you need to buy or do in advance, such as purchasing a harness, long line, flotation jacket, or getting vaccinations and paperwork sorted.



Not for everyone

Going on holiday isn't for all dogs: one who is elderly or has health or behavioural issues might not cope well with changes of environment, routine, the journey there, or may only be capable of limited activities. Be realistic — with good planning your holiday may be challenging but still feasible to meet your dog's needs, but always be mindful as to whether it will be fun for him, and make an honest judgment as to whether it's fair to take him. Remember that your dog loves being with you and will tend not to complain, soldiering on even when he's not enjoying himself.

Above: Make sure your dog is fit enough if you are planning some long-distance hikes.

Above middle: If you hope to do some swimming make sure your dog is up to it before you leave for your break.

Right: Together you and your dog can explore new places.

"Of course, you don't necessarily need to go away to have a great holiday with your dog..."

PLAN AHEAD

If your dog is used to a fairly quiet environment and you are going to be visiting a much busier one, your holiday might feel like a stressful rather than relaxing break for him. Take a few trips to busy places local to your home to help accustom him, beginning gradually and taking things at his pace, building in lots of positive experiences, such as stops for a few treats.

You can also spend time brushing up on basic obedience; as well as having decent sit, stay, and leave commands, it never hurts to improve on that recall! Make sure your dog's lead walking is up to scratch too, as there may be times when he has to be on it, and it will be much nicer for both of you if he doesn't pull. Stopping for lunch or dinner at a dog-friendly pub or cafe can also be an enjoyable part of your holiday. If you have taught your dog to settle on a towel or rug, and it can be easily carried

around with you, it can make life much easier.

Doggy etiquette is also important; not everyone may love your pet as much as you do, so work on teaching him any necessary social skills, such as not jumping up at people or being over-boisterous with other dogs he meets.

HOME FROM HOME

Of course, you don't necessarily need to go away to have a great holiday with your dog — with a bit of planning, a home-based one can be just as enjoyable. Visit local dog-friendly tourist attractions,





Above: Enjoy some spectacular scenery on coastal paths.

Right: The UK's National Parks are popular with dog owners who are looking for a walk-based holiday.



venture further afield on day trips you don't normally have the time to go on, enjoy pub lunches and picnics, and invite friends and their dogs to join you on excursions to add a party air.

MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS...

Make sure you keep your phone or camera charged up so you can take lots of pictures and videos of your dog on holiday. When you get home again, it can be nice to make up a photo album showing all your highlights. It's relatively inexpensive and very simple to do using one of the many online photo services. The finished book makes a lovely memento which is much easier to look at and enjoy than having all your pics digitally stored.

Case study above right: Karen and the dogs at Cerne Abbas in Dorset.
Case study right: Enjoying the view out to sea.

"We have scaled the ramparts of ancient hill forts and medieval castles, explored the depths of Cheddar caves..."

Case study

"WE JUST PLAIN MISSED THEM"

Buckinghamshire-based Your Dog contributor Karen Bush had one holiday abroad with her partner but without the dogs. "We had a great time enjoying the sights of Rome, but even though we knew the dogs were in the best of hands with Mick's parents, we still couldn't help worrying about them," she explained. "Suppose something happened and we weren't there for them? Besides which, we just plain missed them. After that, we never holidayed without them again — and what a wonderful time we had; it was a decision we never regretted making. As well as enjoying their company 24/7, our search for dog-friendly attractions meant we discovered places we never knew existed and would probably never have visited otherwise. We have scaled the ramparts of ancient hill forts and medieval castles, explored the depths of Cheddar caves (where one small child delightedly exclaimed: "Look! Cave dogs!"). We've paddled in the sea, walked down the same slipway that Bluebird and other cars attempting land speed records have driven along, enjoyed glorious moonlit views over a still ocean, and found a fossilised dinosaur tooth on a beach. The memories are countless and have included many firsts for all of us, such as our first ride on a steam train. We wouldn't have missed a single minute of any of it for the world!"



YOUR DOG MEMBERSHIP

Join the Your Dog Membership and you can benefit from hundreds of discounts and offers on dog-friendly accommodation when planning your holiday with your dog. To find out how you can become a member and more about what the membership can offer you, turn to page 59.

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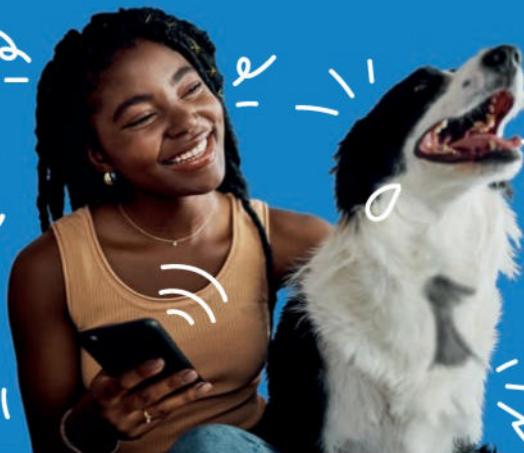
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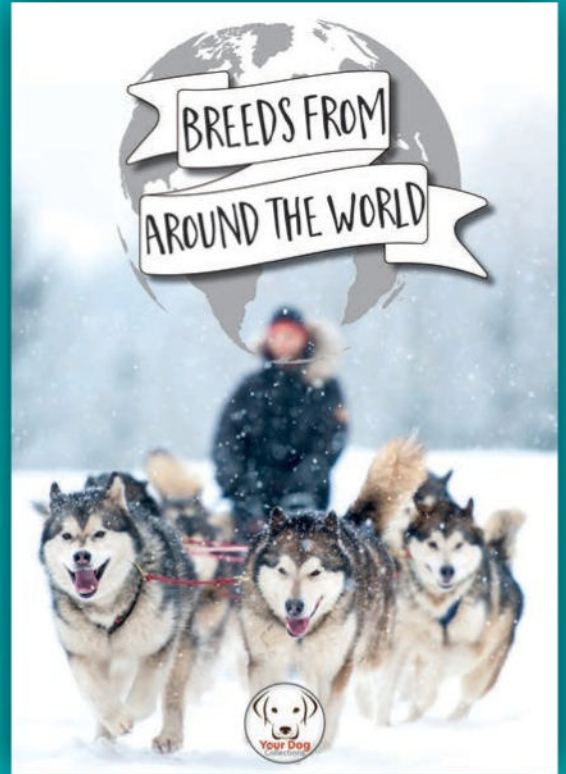
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**DID YOU
KNOW?**

There are currently 1,100 working Hearing Dog partnerships across the UK.

Over its 40 years, Hearing Dogs has matched 2,500 dogs with deaf partners and has over 3,000 volunteers.

Above: Joanna and Joey.

My right-hand man!

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary, has trained thousands of dogs to assist people with hearing loss. **Elizabeth Denholm** talks to one of the charity's deaf partners about her life-changing companion.

Right: Training a hearing dog to alert to a crying baby.

Below right: This photo shows what a dog does when the alarm clock goes off and the deaf person is asleep in bed; the dog will jump on the bed or pull the duvet off to wake them up.

DID YOU KNOW?

The puppies start their training at eight weeks of age and will graduate at around 16 months old.

They work through their Puppy Stars — a series of Hearing Dogs awards which monitor their progress in obedience, behaviour, and social skills.

Training is reward-based using treats or a favourite toy.

Being able to hear plays a role in every part of our existence, from the pleasure of listening to music or birdsong to keeping us safe from danger.

The charity Hearing Dogs for Deaf People trains dogs to alert deaf adults and children to a variety of sounds, such as an alarm clock or mobile phone as well as smoke alarms and baby monitors. But the dogs provide so much more through love and companionship, reducing the anxiety and depression associated with deafness.

David Robson, head of marketing at Hearing Dogs, said: "The co-founders of the charity, Dr Bruce Fogle and Lady Beatrice Wright, knew that deafness is an isolating disability. It can take away a person's ability to communicate, freely and easily, with friends and family. Some people aren't sure how to approach a deaf person, so often they just don't bother. This can lead to a loss in confidence and the deaf person avoiding contact with others, causing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

"Dr Fogle and Lady Wright knew the comfort and companionship a pet dog can bring. If you add in the impressive sound work we teach our dogs, so they can alert deaf people to important sounds, the benefits for their deaf partner become completely life-changing."

Joanna Thompson recounts how her hearing dog, Joey, a Miniature Poodle, changed her life after years of struggling with hearing loss. The mother of three lives in Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, with her husband, David, and children Fraser, Sophie, and Emily.

Q What type of hearing loss do you have?

A "I had tinnitus in my teenage years and it got worse when I went to university. I was referred to audiology and I was diagnosed with tinnitus and sensitivity to certain sounds.

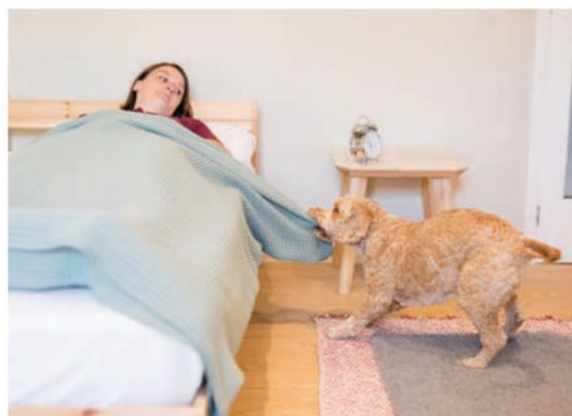
"I was in denial about my deteriorating hearing. I kept finding an excuse but in reality it was getting worse. I would miss the cooker timer and the smoke alarm would go off. And I wouldn't hear people in supermarkets so didn't know to move out of the way. Someone once pushed their trolley into me because I didn't move.

"The most serious thing was that I couldn't hear my children. When they were babies I realised I had to be more honest with myself. I went for another hearing test and came out with two hearing aids. I had degenerative hearing loss."



Right: Cocker Spaniels are among the breeds considered well suited to being a hearing dog.

Images: Paul Wilkinson.



"...I was just blown away so we decided to volunteer for Hearing Dogs at the weekends..."

Q How did you learn about Hearing Dogs for Deaf People?

A "Before we married, my husband and I started learning British Sign Language (BSL). The BSL trainer had organised a demonstration by Hearing Dogs and I was just blown away so we decided to volunteer for Hearing Dogs at the weekends, walking the dogs. It was amazing for us because we worked full-time and didn't have a dog, although I had grown up with them."

Q At what point did you start to think 'I want a hearing dog'?

A "At first, I felt I didn't have the level of deafness to need a dog myself. The irony was that I knew what sounds the dogs were trained to listen for but I was in denial. I was managing and other people needed dogs more than I did.

"I struggled talking on the phone. I was more reliant on my husband and, as the children got older, I realised they were trying to protect me. It was a natural progression without realising the extent to which it was happening.



Above left: Settle training in a cafe.

Above right: The dogs are trained in many different environments.



“I couldn’t believe it was happening to me. I’m going to cry now remembering...”

November 2015 and matched with Joey in February 2016, which is almost unheard of. It just happened that Joey, who was born in 2014, was there waiting. It’s usually a three to four-year wait after you have applied for a dog.”

Q Were you nervous before meeting Joey?

A “I was nervous and so excited. I couldn’t believe it was happening to me. I’m going to cry now remembering, because it was such an emotional time. It was like all my Christmases at once and more.”

Q How were you introduced to Joey?

A “The trainer came to the house with Joey for two days. The trainer observed our meeting and we went out for walks. It was about making sure that we weren’t just a match on paper but that there was a mutual bond. With Joey it was instant as he came dashing down our driveway.”

Q Was any training tailored to you?

A “Yes, and this is always the case with partnerships.

“But one day, in a shop, I was talking to another partner who had his hearing dog with him. Suddenly, his dog alerted him.

“Is he being cheeky?” I asked. The man replied: ‘No, the alarm is going off!’ Someone had set off the security alarm and I hadn’t heard it.

“He then said to me: ‘Why haven’t you got a hearing dog? You need to be honest with yourself and accept.’

“My first thought was: ‘I’m not deaf enough’, but it’s not about being deaf enough. It’s about not hearing particular sounds; not hearing alarms or the doorbell. I had been volunteering for eight years before I applied — long enough to know better.”

Q How were you assessed?

A “The key element is an up-to-date audiology hearing test result. The Hearing Dogs assessment is then very much about you, your lifestyle, your work, and your home life to see if it’s a suitable environment for a dog.”

Q How long did you have to wait for Joey?

A “I was extremely lucky because I was eligible in

Right: Joey responds to the alert 'Call Mum'.

Far right: The dogs are trained to recognise all types of alarm.



DID YOU KNOW?

Hearing Dogs has its own breeding programme with four breeds often having the perfect traits for a hearing dog: Labradors, Cocker Spaniels, Miniature Poodles, and Cockapoos.

It was specific to my lifestyle, for my office and my work needs, alerting to sounds on my mobile phone. I got a new doorbell, which was the same as the one Joey had been trained to listen for, and a new cooker timer.

"A very specific alert is 'Call Mum'. If I'm upstairs and one of the children falls over downstairs and is hurt, I can't hear them shouting for me. But now my children say to Joey: 'Call Mum' and he will run to find me and give me the alert then lead me back to the child.

"It's a life-saver and a huge comfort now I know when the children need me."

Q How does Joey alert?

A "When Joey hears one of the sounds he is trained to listen for, he tells me by sitting and placing his front paws on my leg. I then spread my arms and say: 'What is it?' and he will take me to where the sound is.

"The only different alert is a fire alarm, which is the same principle. Joey alerts me by placing his paws on my leg but then he will lie flat on the floor and I know that means danger."

Q How would you describe the difference Joey has made to your life?

A "After all this time it's still so overwhelming. I never anticipated the impact a hearing dog would have ... I really couldn't. He gives me confidence and independence and companionship. I wasn't aware I was so reliant on other people until Joey came. And then

I realised I how much I can do for myself again.

"Like the 'Call Mum' alert. I spent so much of my time checking and double-checking the children. I couldn't let them go too far away in case I didn't hear them. I was under constant stress without realising it. Then, when I got Joey, it was a real life-changer for me, and my children got their lives back."

Q When Joey retires can you keep him?

A "There are three options. I can keep him as a retired hearing dog but he can't go in shops and can't wear the Hearing Dogs jacket. He can do sound work at home if he's fit enough.

"Or, I could have him as a retired hearing dog and have another hearing dog as well. But any other dog would need to be matched with Joey.

"And finally, if there is a situation where having a working dog is paramount, then the retired dog is rehomed. But I will definitely keep Joey."

Q How would you describe Joey's personality?

A "He's as mad as I am. He loves life. He's energetic and loves investigating. He's very relaxed and everyone's friend and brilliant with the children. He's my right-hand man, my star."

Q What would you say to other people with hearing loss who might be thinking of applying?

A "I would say absolutely go for it. I can't recommend it enough. The change to your life is immense. Even if you haven't had a dog before, but like dogs, you should still apply."

Below: Joanna with her children and Joey.



Hearing Dogs trains three types of assistance dog.

- Full hearing dogs (like Joey) — provide support in the home and when you're out (shops, offices, public transport). These have full assistance dog access rights.
- Sound support dogs — provide sound work support only in the home.
- Confidence and companion dogs — provide companionship and emotional support only.

MORE INFO

For more information, visit www.hearingdogs.org.uk

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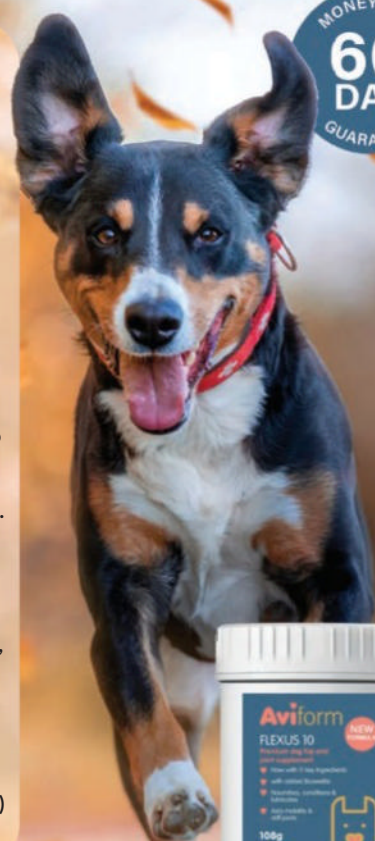
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Send us a picture and tell us all about your dog; share your views on what's happening in the dog world and the ups and downs of dog ownership; what do you think of our features and content and what would you like to see more of?

This is the place to be if you want to reach out to other Your Dog readers and the magazine team to share your love of everything dog. Get in touch!



Have your say!

The place to share your news and tell us what you think.

Catching up on the gossip!

I rescued a wee dog from Cyprus two years ago and she really gelled with my dog-sitter's dog, among others.

While out on a walk one day, my dog-sitter took the photographs (right), which show both dogs in absolute sync with each other; we wondered what they were talking about. We both joked about it and said the two gals were probably talking about their arthritis... but who knows.

Sadly, my dog-sitter lost her Rottie, Tiega, in November. I'll always be grateful to her, for welcoming my dog Ceilidh.

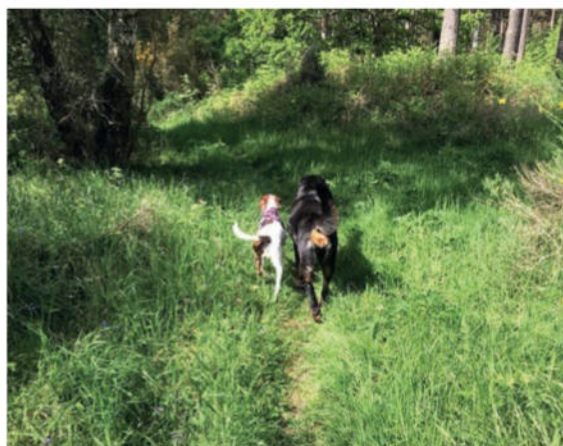
The photo below is the one where I think they might have been 'getting the craic' about their arthritis — who knows? I never thought a photo of two dogs' backsides could be so expressive.

A topic like 'What do dogs talk about?' would be quite entertaining.

I would love to hear your thoughts, and those of other readers.

Yvonne Scott, via email.

ED'S NOTE: I don't know what other readers think, but I absolutely love these pics; the dogs seem so relaxed and laid-back in each other's company. They're definitely having a good gossip in the second pic, but as to whether it's about arthritis, I'm not so sure! Why not send us in more pics of your dogs' conversations?



STRANGE BEHAVIOUR!

I really enjoyed reading the feature 'Why does my dog do that?' (February issue).

Some of our dogs' behaviour is so



Right: From our February issue.

incomprehensible; it's really good to have an expert like Tamsin reveal the reasons for it, and it helps dog owners in their management of such behaviour. My Cairn Terrier seems to exhibit most of these behaviours (although he doesn't chase his tail), but he does also scratch the ground with his back legs after doing a wee, bury any edible chews he's given in the garden, and sucks and kneads any soft toys with his front paws when he's lying on the sofa!

Could we have a 'Why does my dog do that?' part two?

Karen Masters, Lincolnshire.

TURNING ON THE CHARM!

A few years ago, when I was living at home with my parents for a short while before starting a new job, I noticed that our family dog, a lovely old Staffordshire Bull Terrier, would go outside to toilet and then disappear for half an hour or so.

My parents' house is in a very rural area so that wasn't really a problem, but the house is semi-detached and I was slightly concerned that Brutus could be going into the neighbours' garden and making a nuisance of himself. One day, after he'd done

YOUR MAIL...

Right: Staffordshire Bull Terriers are full of character.

his disappearing act on several consecutive days, I decided to follow him to get to the bottom of the mystery. I went to the neighbours' garden, but despite a thorough search, there was no sign of him whatsoever. Then I noticed that our neighbours' kitchen door was open, and rather terrified by what I might find, I gingerly knocked on the door jamb and shouted hello.

"Come and see what Brutus is up to," came the reply. I winced and peeped around the corner. There in the centre of the kitchen was Brutus, the upturned waste bin close by, carefully removing every item of rubbish and checking whether it contained anything edible! I was

mortified and apologised profusely — but it got worse! According to our neighbour, this was a fairly common occurrence! If he spotted that the kitchen door was open, which it often was in the better weather, Brutus would push his way in, stand in the kitchen doorway wagging his tail in greeting as the family were sitting down to eat their breakfast, then go over to the waste bin, knock it over, and proceed to scatter the contents across the floor. "The

trouble is," said our neighbour, "he does it in such a cheerful, charming, and happy way that we can't be too cross with him. It's hilarious."

Hilarious or not, needless to say Brutus' routine changed from that day onwards and, sadly, he passed away just a couple of years later — still able to turn on the charm at his cheekiest best. He really was a character!

*Linda Hetherington,
North Yorkshire.*



FOR THE LOVE OF AMY

I am responding to the letter 'All change!' (*Your Dog January issue*).

In 1994, I was given a 20-month-old West Highland White Terrier, named Amy, by someone who no longer wanted her. Amy was very energetic and full of play and fun. She would walk for miles, loved her toys, and loved a good run. She would chase anything moving fast: joggers, bicycles, or fast-running dogs. My husband, Peter, always said she was 'on a mission'. Amy was like this all her life until she reached the age of 15 years. She suddenly got arthritis in her back legs. My husband always bought me *Your Dog Magazine* and the magazine introduced me to Dorwest Herbs. I researched arthritis and bought garlic and fenugreek tablets with mixed vegetable tablets for healthy bones and skin (thank you *Your Dog* for the continued information on keeping our dogs healthy).

Amy started to forget to go outside to toilet and I knew she was getting canine cognitive dysfunction, doggy dementia. She stopped playing with her toys; she stopped chasing everything. She lost her hearing and her sight was failing. She also used to fall asleep in her dinner bowl. It was so sad to see the big change in her. It was heartbreaking. We also liked camping in our touring caravan and felt we couldn't do this any more, so I bought a dog stroller. This meant we could meet Amy's needs halfway and still go out with her in the stroller; she was getting the fresh air. People we met said what a good idea that was. We had a younger dog who liked long walks, so we took Amy with us but carried her a lot. My husband always had Amy tucked under his arm.

Dogs always give us joy when they are younger and we have to change our lifestyle to accommodate our ageing pets. A lot of people are too quick to think that an ageing

dog is suffering and needs to be put to sleep. Unless they have other health problems, they can go on for quite a few more years. We kept Amy until she was aged 17 years and 8 months old; when we finally said goodbye it was only because she could no longer stand up. We learned a lot from Amy and have done it all again with our elderly Shih Tzu. But now we know the signs and know what to expect, and the dog stroller will be out in use again. To anyone worried about a dog with dementia, I'd say if the dog wants a short walk, give them a short walk. If they don't want to play, it doesn't matter — all the play has been done in their youth. Now they need understanding, lots of fuss, and most of all, love, and that bit of extra care.

Lynn Smith, West Midlands.



Right above: Amy in her younger years.

Right below: Amy asleep in her bowl.



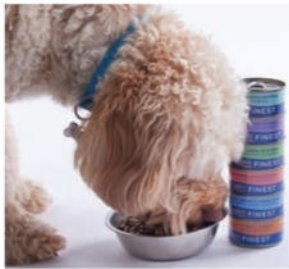
GET IN TOUCH

You can email your views, thoughts, and pics of your much-loved dogs (along with plenty of details) to sarah.wright@warnersgroup.co.uk, or if you'd prefer, you can still send a letter to our postal address on page 5, or post a comment on social media. The editor reserves the right to edit anything submitted.

Freebies

Here's your chance to win some fabulous prizes — we've got 20 giveaways up for grabs.

**1
TO GIVE
AWAY**



LOWER-FAT FOOD BUNDLE

Fish4Dogs is offering one lucky reader the chance to win £250-worth of its products. Carrying extra pounds can have a negative effect on your dog's health, so feeding a healthier, lower-calorie diet could be worth considering. Fish4Dogs food and treats use only fish as the protein source.

Fish is a highly palatable, exceptionally high-quality protein, low in saturated fats and sugars, so may be a suitable lower-fat alternative to some food and treats produced from meat proteins.

Our winner's prize will include cans from the Finest complementary cans range.

● For more information, visit www.fish4dogs.com

**6
TO GIVE
AWAY**



PUPPY BEDS WITH HEATPADS

The SnuggleSafe Cosy Puppy Bed comes with an energy-saving heatpad, offering warm comfort to your pup for up to 10 hours. It has a special pocket in which you

can place the heatpad. The bed is machine washable with a removable top and case cover, and has a diameter of 50cm.

● For more information, visit www.snugglesafe.co.uk or call 01903 730811.

**7
TO GIVE
AWAY**

DOG DIGESTION PACKS

Aviform's digestion supplements will support your dog's everyday digestion needs as well as helping when fast action is required.

Provided in each pack is TummyTonic 300g, a proven daily tonic, which supports digestive health, boosts beneficial bacteria, reduces

bad bacteria, and helps with immunity. It is ideal for maintaining a healthy gut. The second supplement is Montytummy Liquid 250ml for when accidents occur and fast action is required in firming sloppy poos.

● For more information, visit [aviform.co.uk](http://www.aviform.co.uk) or call 01953 528008.



**5
TO GIVE
AWAY**



RAWHIDE-FREE TREATS BUNDLES

Dogs love to chew, but traditional rawhide can cause choking and digestive problems, and that's why Zeus Better Bones are rawhide-free, safe to chew, and easy to digest.

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types and three mouth-watering flavours: chicken, rosemary & thyme, duck & cranberry, and lamb & mint, there's a Zeus Better Bones for every dog.

We have five bundles of Zeus Better Bones soft treats to give away.

● For more information, visit www.zeusfordogs.com

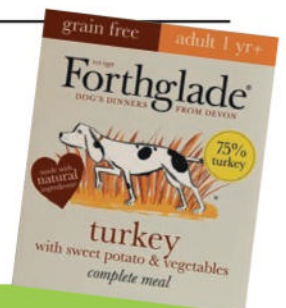
**1
TO GIVE
AWAY**

NATURAL PET FOOD FEAST

Fancy winning £250-worth of Forthglade natural pet food? Your pup will adore these award-winning recipes, made with natural ingredients that are free from any junk or fillers. The prize includes meals from the

popular complete, grain-free range. Each meal contains 75 per cent protein and is bursting with added vitamins and minerals — ideal for sensitive tummies and available in recipes tailored for puppies, adult, and senior dogs.

● For more information, visit www.forthglade.com.



HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win these fabulous prizes, enter online by visiting www.yourdog.co.uk/freebies, quote the code ZTL22LTZ, and follow the instructions on screen. The closing date for entries is March 15, 2023 (UK only). Please note, you can enter online from February 7, 2023. For full competition terms and conditions, visit www.warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms

Looking forward to Crufts

The world's most famous dog show rolls into town this month. **Joanne Bednall** picks out just a handful of the highlights visitors can expect from Crufts 2023.

Fast and furious flyball, creative but precise heelwork to music, the heart-warming Kennel Club Hero Dog Award and, of course, the unique buzz of Best in Show, this year's Crufts is set to be a canine extravaganza to remember.

Bursting with all things dog-related, the event will run over four days, from March 9 – 12 at the NEC, Birmingham, and showcase the first full programme of events since before the pandemic. Here's a taste of what canine enthusiasts can look forward to at this year's show...



Right: Best in Show winner 2022 Baxer, with his co-owner and handler Patrick Oware.

Image: Sandy Young, Flick.digital.

It's show time!

A mind-blowing 20,000 dogs across 222 breeds have qualified for Crufts 2023 and will be aiming to emulate last year's winner Flat Coated Retriever Baxer, and lift the coveted Best in Show trophy.

The now seven-year-old liver-coloured dog — who goes by the name of CH Almanza Backseat Driver in the show ring — was bred in Sweden by Ragnhild Ulin. He was named top dog by judge Stuart Plane in a packed Resorts World Arena, alongside his co-owner and handler, Patrick Oware, from Oslo, Norway.

The Reserve Best in Show was Utility Group winner Toy Poodle Waffle, co-owned and handled by Tom Isherwood, from Preston, Lancashire.

The other five finalists were Greyhound Aya (Hound Group), Siberian Husky Akela (Working Group), Irish Terrier Donnie (Terrier Group), Border Collie Lenor (Pastoral Group), and Yorkshire Terrier Conan (Toy Group).



Stuart Mallard says judging Best in Show at Crufts is the pinnacle of any judge's career.

Above left: Stuart pictured in 1988 with Bouvier des Flandres Brett.

Image: Diane Pearce.

Above right: Junior Warrant 2023 finalists, with judges Simon Parsons and Mark James.

Image: The Kennel Club.

Right: The winners of Scruffts 2022, Hazel French and Questa.

Image: Flick.digital and The Kennel Club.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Crufts 2023 Best in Show judge Stuart Mallard is approved to award Challenge Certificates in 71 breeds across five of the seven groups.

When he's not judging dogs in countries as far afield as South Africa, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and the Caribbean, Nottinghamshire-based Stuart is a highly-regarded canine and wildlife artist.

Q Can you remember the first dog you owned?

"As a child, I had a Jack Russell Terrier called Jane and a mongrel called Kim, but my first pedigree dog was an Old English Sheepdog called Andy. A school friend owned one while we were growing up and I was always attracted to the breed's coat and fantastic temperament."

Q Which breeds have you been personally involved with over the years?

"I lived in Holland for 10 years and became fascinated with the Bouvier des Flandres. I brought dogs back with me and in 1988, I gained my first ticket in the breed at Crufts and made up the first Bouvier champion in the UK. I've also had Tibetan Terriers, Bichons Frise, and Beagles."

Q What has been your proudest moment in the ring?



"Bursting with all things dog-related..."

"Winning Best in Show at the Ladies Kennel Association Championship Show in 1974 with my Old English Sheepdog, Lameda Perfect Pal, or Guy."

Q How do you balance your work as an artist with your involvement in the dog world?

"I am very self-disciplined, and if I am working on a piece, I just knuckle down. In fact, I have to finish a commission before Crufts — someone is coming a very long way to collect it!"

Q You've judged and exhibited at shows all over the world — what are you most looking forward to at this year's Crufts?

"Judging Best in Show at Crufts is a massive engagement — it was a real surprise and honour to be invited, and it is the pinnacle of any judge's career."

"It will be a real privilege to see seven beautiful dogs, all fit for function and in fabulous condition."

Q Can you reveal what you will be looking for in the winner?

"I will be looking for a dog that represents the breed standard without any exaggerations, but has the attitude and charisma that sets it apart from the rest."

"But above all, temperament is the most important."

BEST OF THE BEST!

Don't miss a special one-off feature on the first day of the show — Thursday, March 9 — to mark the Kennel Club's 150th year.

Each Best in Show winner from every all breed championship dog show that took place during 2022, including last year's Crufts Best in Show winner, Baxer, has been invited to take part in the ultimate head-to-head — The Kennel Club 150th Anniversary Celebration Stakes.

FROM PRESTIGIOUS PEDIGREES...

Congratulations to those shortlisted for The Kennel Club Junior Warrant Winner of the Year final, the gold standard for young pedigree dogs.

After qualifying in heats at open shows around the country last summer, 44 dogs and handlers went forward to the semi-finals in October at London's Discover Dogs, where judges Simon Parsons and Mark James selected just 10 finalists.

The Junior Warrant is an award for pedigree dogs aged between six and 18 months who have won 25 hard-earned points at open and



Right: The Bavarian Mountain Hound is known for its calm, biddable temperament.

Image: Lisa Croft-Elliott and The Kennel Club.

Far right: Pete Lewin and Bob acknowledge the crowd at last year's Hero Dog Award.

Image: Flick.digital and The Kennel Club.

championship shows. Attaining a Junior Warrant is one of the highest levels of success for young pedigree dogs.

Good luck to them all.

...TO LOVABLE CROSSBREDS

On Saturday, March 11, the Scruffts Family Crossbreed of the Year will be crowned.

Twenty-four crossbreeds and their owners have beaten off stiff competition in nationwide heats throughout the year to earn their place in the Crufts semi-finals.

Just four of these combinations will then go on to compete for the top prize in the final.

Who can forget last year's winner, Golden Retriever X Labrador Questa, owned by Hazel French from Highley, Shropshire?

Hazel suffers from severe brittle asthma and osteoporosis, and her five-year-old dog is vital for supporting her in everyday tasks around the home.

Not only do the pair take part in Kennel Club rally and heelwork to music, but they've raised more than £7,000 for Canine Partners, while Questa also helps pick up litter locally.

FIRST CLASS!

The Bavarian Mountain Hound will have its own breed class for the first time.

This medium-sized scent hound is mobile, muscular, and powerful, and can be identified by its light, springy movement, strong back, well-muscled fore- and hindquarters and dense, close-fitting coat.

With a body slightly longer than it is high, these dogs were bred for their strong scenting ability and endurance, and have been used to trail wounded game in mainly mountainous regions of Germany since the early 20th century.



The breed is known to have a calm, biddable temperament and be devoted to its owner, but can be rather reserved with strangers.

HERO HOUNDS!

Just before Best in Show takes place in the Resorts World Arena on the evening of Sunday, March 12, the winner of The Kennel Club Hero Dog Award 2023 — formerly known as Friends for Life — will be announced.

Five very special canine companions and their owners will have made it through to the final, but it will be the result of a nationwide public vote that will determine who takes home the coveted trophy.

Last year's Hero Dog was Bob, part of a team of life-saving Newfoundlands, who enable people with mental health issues to experience the benefits of swimming with these water rescue dogs.

Led by Pete Lewin, an East Midlands Ambulance Service paramedic from Leicester, the non-profit organisation focuses on suicide prevention and supporting staff from front-line emergency services, disabled children, and military veterans.

The winner of the 2023 Hero Dog Award will be presented with



a £5,000 cheque from The Kennel Club Charitable Trust to be donated to a canine charity of their choice. The four other finalists will each receive a cheque for £1,000 for their chosen charity.

DOG SHOPPING HEAVEN!

The 25 acres and five halls of the NEC will be packed with more than 350 trade stands bursting with exciting new products and special show offers — a dog lover's paradise! Along with every item you could ever wish to buy your dog, both large and lesser-known organisations and canine charities will be represented.

In addition, don't miss the specialist displays from Medical Detection Dogs and West Midlands Police Dogs, which will be taking place in the arena over the four days.

DISCOVER YOUR PERFECT DOG

Discover Dogs returns to Crufts 2023, showcasing more than 200 breeds. Prospective owners will have the chance to meet and greet their favourite dogs, speak to experts, and find out if their chosen breed is likely to fit into their lifestyle.

MORE INFO:

- Crufts runs from March 9 – 12 at the NEC, Birmingham. This year, Gundogs are on Thursday, Working and Pastoral breeds on Friday, Terriers and Hounds on Saturday, and Utility and Toy, followed by Best in Show, on Sunday.
- Catch all the action on Channel 4, More4, and the Crufts YouTube channel or via Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.
- Ticket prices remain unchanged from 2022 and can be purchased from www.crufts.org.uk/tickets via the Crufts official ticketing partner, Ticket Factory.
- For the full programme of events, visit <https://www.crufts.org.uk/whats-on>

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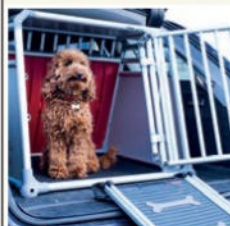
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YOUR ACTIVE DOG

There's more to life with your dog than a stroll around the block, as animal scientist **Jacqueline Boyd** explains in this new series.

“...there are disciplines and activities that will encourage you to think beyond ‘going for a walk around the block’...”

TOP TIP!

Do your research — does your chosen activity need specialised kit or equipment to make it safe for you and your dog?

Canicross can be enjoyable for both dog and owner.

I can vividly remember watching my first Cocker Spaniel hurtle around the garden at breakneck speed and thinking ‘she needs a job.’ My first instinct was that the ‘job’ needed to be something fast so that she ‘burned off’ all that apparent excess energy. How wrong I was.

Dealing with excess energy is a common query from many canine care-givers — ‘how do I calm my dog down?’; the answer depends on many factors. In some cases, the dog’s personality simply means that calming down is unlikely! Sometimes, people walk their dogs or free run them for miles or for so many hours per day in an effort to burn off energy.

What often happens however is that an already naturally active dog becomes fitter and fitter. They then become even more active and in need of increased activity — a classic vicious circle in the dog-human relationship. Capturing that energy and providing a more suitable activity outlet for the dog might be preferable instead.

Even if you have a relaxed canine companion, who might be more interested in sharing your sofa than going for a run, there are disciplines and activities that will encourage you to think beyond ‘going for a walk around the block’, no matter what shape, size, breed, type, or even age your dog is.

We are going to focus on your active dog in this series, exploring why activity is a great idea and then examining individual activities and disciplines that might catch you and your dog’s interest.



Right: Gundog breeds will naturally retrieve items...

Far right: ...while terriers will often grab and shake their toys.

TOP TIP!
Activities that channel what your dog already loves to do are great choices.



MY ACTIVE DOGS

Megan was my first Cocker Spaniel — a beautiful, blue roan, working-bred spaniel and my introduction to the world of (highly) active dogs. Her dad was a field trial champion — one of the biggest competitive achievements in the gundog world. Her mum was a working gundog, and her pedigree was full of the names of ancestors world famous in the working Cocker Spaniel world.

She came home to an already active household — I loved walking and had horses, so I knew that there would be lots of outdoor activity, and her breeder clearly trusted that she was going to a suitable home too.

What I didn't appreciate was that there was going to



“...I am now a huge advocate for keeping dogs active...”

be much more to canine activity for Megan than just walking, pottering about while I did all my horse jobs, and occasionally retrieving a toy. Looking back, Megan could have been described as a sports car with slightly dodgy brakes — at the time, I was much more used to driving a small hatchback with sharp and solid brakes!

Twenty-plus years later, I am now a huge advocate for keeping dogs active, even those who might be naturally more laid-back. Thanks to Megan, most of my physical activity is related to my little team of spaniels, whether it is running around an agility course, canicrossing, scent work, mantrailing, heelwork to music and freestyle, or doing gundog work and training.

Megan's legacy also means I am passionate about sharing the joy, fun, and functionality of working with your active dog and taking part in activities.

MORE THAN JUST WALKS

Even the most relaxed dog who loves his home comforts (the sofa lovers and fair-weather walkers) can benefit from activity. What is also brilliant is that there is a huge range of activities, training, and competitive disciplines you can do with your dog — there really is something for everyone, from fast and furious flyball, to calmer and more controlled rally and obedience.

Before the whirlwind that was Megan blasted into my world, I had previously trained (and competed a little) in obedience with Labradors, a Standard Poodle, and a Toy Poodle. I loved the precision and skill involved, as well as the functional value of the training, so I was no stranger to canine activities and the opportunities available. What I hadn't really appreciated then was the benefit of activity for the dog's mental, emotional, and physical health.

It is undeniable that exercise is good. Our dogs benefit hugely from regular walking, and it gives them a chance to interact with their environment, scents, other dogs, people, and sometimes even other animals.

Walking is also good for us. Indeed, there is lots of evidence that shows people who live with dogs have higher levels of physical exercise than people without

Below: While regular walks benefit you and your dog, there are other activities you can also get involved in.



TOP TIP!

Find a fun, friendly, and supportive trainer if you are new to an activity.

dogs. This can also mean improved health outcomes, better recovery after illness or injury, and enhanced social interactions too. Walking is also a great way to support weight management for dogs and people — especially important where intense physical activity might be less than ideal for some dogs and people, perhaps because of existing excess bodyweight, health concerns, or even the effects of age.

However, there can easily be much more to activity for dogs than just walks — even for senior or less able dogs, and those who are not naturally busy.

EXERCISE FOR BODY AND MIND

Activity need not be just about physical effort and exertion. There are lots of ways that you can exercise your dog's brain too, and this is ideal for more laid-back dogs.

In some cases, activity output effectively exercises both body and mind. Indeed, for those highly active and naturally exuberant dogs, activities that challenge them cognitively and force them to slow down their physical movement and use their brains can be really great ways to tire them out in a positive way, rather than simply allowing them to run to exhaustion (and potential injury too).

TRAINING IS IMPORTANT

Whatever activity you are interested in, it is important to get support and advice. Make sure that you get good advice regarding your chosen activity, ideally from people also training and perhaps competing in the discipline. This way you can make sure you are learning about best practice and how to undertake the activity with your dog safely — critical for him and for you.

While there will be generic skills that will be useful for your dog to have to take part in most activities, specific skills will also be needed. Getting experienced support and advice is vital, especially if you have future competitive ambitions.

ACTIVITY CHOICE

You might also need to consider the suitability of the activity for your dog and vice versa. While all dogs can undertake most activities, there will be situations where you might want to think about key factors to keep your dog happy and healthy.

Age is an important factor to consider. Many activities can include impact and forces that could be potentially damaging to the joints of young dogs for example.

Below: Whatever activity you're considering, it's worth getting the right support and advice from a qualified trainer.

Right: Working on your dog's basic training will help prepare him for new activities.

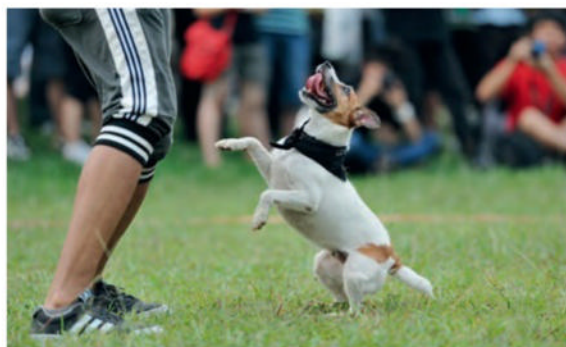
“Make sure that you get good advice regarding your chosen activity...”





Above: Rally is an activity that could suit an older, more laid-back dog.

Right: Heelwork to music can help build your bond with your pet.



“...the Border Collie will naturally herd and attempt to ‘round up’ other animals...”

For many dogs, their ancestry can also help us identify ideal activities for them. Pastoral breeds such as the Border Collie will naturally herd and attempt to ‘round up’ other animals — even if they are not sheep! Typically, gundogs will naturally hunt and retrieve items and terriers will often grab and shake items, mimicking how they would deal with prey animals they would have historically hunted. Even for mixed breed dogs, considering their natural skills and interests can be helpful too. Indeed, some mixed breeds have multiple skills sets, making them multi-functional activity partners and able to turn their paw to many different things.

Sometimes your choice of dog buddy can make choosing an activity easy. It can also make living with them and training them easier too. Rather than trying to stop a retriever retrieving, a sight hound running, or a spaniel hunting, find activities that channel their natural, in-built skills and instincts.

Activity with your dog should be fun for you both. You might choose to try an activity ‘just to see’ or aim for world championship level — either is possible!

TOP TIP!
Clubs can be a great way to meet like-minded people (and dogs) and learn more about different canine activities.

Only dogs over 18 months of age can compete in agility, and agility training over jumps and other equipment is strictly limited for dogs under this age. Similar regulations apply in other disciplines too, to ensure the health and welfare of any dogs taking part.

However, training in basic (and essential) skills such as recall and focus would be possible from puppyhood and give you a great foundation for any activity. Similarly, skills such as scent work and tricks with limited impact can also be taught to younger dogs.

For our senior canine friends, activity remains important but might need amending slightly to support them slowing down or becoming a little less able. Alternative activities can also be explored — sniffing skills can be a wonderful way to keep our older friends active in body and mind, but without intense impact or speed, neither of which might be suitable nor even enjoyed by senior dogs.

GOOD FOUNDATIONS

NEXT ISSUE:

We take a closer look at obedience and rally — two activities that attract a wide range of ages, breeds, types, and abilities, which can provide a great foundation for other doggy disciplines.

The hero hound

One dog's bravery and support of his owners through tough times have won him a prestigious annual award.

Joanne Bednall reports.



If any dog can claim to have gone above and beyond for his owners — not just once, but time and time again — then it is Alaskan Malamute Storm.

The 12-year-old dog is described by his owner, 64-year-old Karen Crosby, as a gentle giant with an almost human personality.

"He always has a twinkle in his eye — if a dog could smile, this one could," said Karen, who thoroughly researched the breed after her husband, Phillip, set his heart on an Alaskan Malamute puppy.

The retired occupational therapist had no idea that the cute bundle of fluff they brought home more than a decade ago would grow to become their constant companion, assistance dog, and guardian angel all rolled into one.

In the summer of 2019, Storm went to extraordinary lengths to protect his family when intruders broke into their home in Liverpool.

That night, Phillip had been taken ill and rushed into hospital, and Karen was on her own in the house, feeling exhausted and worried about her husband.

She woke at 6.30am to a neighbour's relative shouting: "Your door's wide open!" Hurrying



down the stairs, Karen's first thought was where was Storm? Her dog was nowhere to be seen.

"The woman told me that she had called the police, but it looked like Storm had blocked the burglars from getting upstairs and they had fled, dropping our possessions all down the road," explained Karen, who was relieved when her dog was found, but shocked to find he appeared unsteady on his feet and very sleepy.

The police, who arrived quickly, "went above and beyond" and were not only able to take fingerprints, but rushed Storm straight to the nearest vet's, where he was put on a drip and underwent tests.

"The thieves had drugged him — they'd given him so much that his liver enzymes were off the scale and he could have died," recalled Karen, who lost cash, a mobile phone, and jewellery in the raid.

Above: Storm sporting his Blue Cross Medal.

Images: James Linsell-Clark/SWNS.

Above right: Karen finds Storm a huge comfort.



Above: Pippin, one of the cats Storm saved.

"These items can be replaced but you can't replace dogs or people. Storm had to be closely monitored for the next six months because the vets were so concerned about his liver."

Then, last May, Storm cemented his heroic hound status with yet another, even more incredible, act of bravery.

Karen had promised Phillip, who's now in a nursing home, that she would get his broken Kindle fixed. While waiting for a taxi to take her home from the repair shop, she received a call from a neighbour telling her that her house was on fire and to get home quickly.

The fire brigade and police were already there when Karen arrived in a state of panic 15 minutes later. Another neighbour had called the emergency services and informed them that there were four animals inside the house — Storm and cats Pushkin, Moonlight, and Pippin.

TO THE RESCUE

"We're getting them out — don't worry," a policeman said, while a firefighter told Karen that Storm had already pushed Moonlight and Pippin to safety through an open window.

But the brave dog couldn't rouse Pushkin, who had been overcome by the smoke and collapsed, so Storm sat calmly by the back door waiting for help to arrive.

The firefighters, who couldn't believe that Storm had saved his two feline friends, resuscitated Pushkin before he was taken to the vet's and given oxygen.

"The police were really impressed with Storm, while a young officer

"Storm brings me so much comfort and keeps me going — I've cried into his fur many a time. He is such a special dog."

commented that he was as well behaved as a trained police dog," said Karen, whose home was gutted in the blaze, which started after a degraded battery in a cordless drill exploded.

"Storm was even taken to the vet by the officer, who refused to leave his side."

But it's not just these extraordinary acts of heroism that have won Storm the prestigious Blue Cross Medal for 2022 — an annual accolade reserved for one extra-special pet, who has changed or saved a person's life.

The Malamute, who beat off stiff competition from 650 nominations in the charity's 125th year, also provided vital assistance to Phillip, who has two brain injuries, as well as epilepsy and vascular dementia, before he moved into the nursing home. Storm helped him to cross roads safely and supported Phillip on his weaker side by gently nudging him to encourage him to walk in a straight line. In 2017, the perceptive dog even put his paw on Phillip's chest, just before he suffered an epileptic seizure. And Karen explained that Storm would often try to prevent her husband from leaving the house if he thought Phillip was in danger.

"When out walking, Phillip would occasionally lose his bearings and just needed to say 'Home!' to Storm

and he would be brought back safely," continued Karen, who now heavily relies on Storm herself, as she suffers from degenerative disc disease, visual field problems, tinnitus, fibromyalgia, and asthma.

This amazing dog alerts his owner to the doorbell and telephone and can sense an imminent asthma attack, refusing to leave Karen's side, while helping to comfort her during the pain of a fibromyalgia flare-up.

"Storm monitors me all night long, and will nudge me and wake me up if he thinks my breathing has changed or I need my inhaler," explained Karen.

"He even reminds me to eat or take my medication if I've forgotten — he'll go in the kitchen and indicate. He'll also pick up on emotions and will put his head in my lap if I am feeling low."

After nominating Storm for the Blue Cross Medal, Karen didn't think "in a million years" he would win.

"I'm over the moon he has won — it was amazing news and I am so proud of him," she added. "Storm is a hero to me for everything he has done and continues to do. He was the runt of the litter but has proved himself to be anything but.

"Storm brings me so much comfort and keeps me going — I've cried into his fur many a time. He is such a special dog."



Right: Storm has gone above and beyond for his owners.

DOG shopping

March's shopping suggestions include a security camera and food storage solutions, all designed with your dog and home in mind.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Keep one eye on your dog and the other on your property and possessions, thanks to leading home security company EZVIZ's latest affordable yet feature-packed camera.

The EZVIZ EB3 battery security camera boasts crystal-clear 2K resolution, smart human motion detection, colour night vision, active defence with a siren and strobe light, customisable voice alerts, and two-way talk for scaring off intruders or instructing delivery drivers.

An integrated PIR sensor can distinguish people from pets or even a flurry of leaves, notifying a connected mobile device of any significant activity.

This weather-resistant camera



can be easily managed via the EZVIZ App, on site or remotely, and offers its users the option to store recordings on a local microSD card of up to 256GB or subscribe to the EZVIZ CloudPlay for fully encrypted cloud storage.

● **Key feature:** Easy to use, an expensive electrician isn't needed to install the budget-busting EZVIZ EB3 as it's battery operated and only needs recharging every 120 days. Investing in a separate EZVIZ compatible solar panel will lower costs further and keep the battery permanently charged.

● **Price:** £89.99; solar panel: £29.99.

● **Available from:** www.ezvizstore.co.uk and www.very.co.uk

CONTEMPORARY CONTAINERS

Manchester-based luxury pet lifestyle brand Scruffs has launched a range of pet storage solutions.

Made from coated steel and boasting a contemporary look to complement modern interiors, Scruffs Cantina Steel Storage Pet Food & Treat Canisters look at home on any kitchen or utility worktop or pantry shelf.

Designed to stylishly store kibble and treats, these sturdy containers have lids that form a seal so food stays fresher for longer.

Scruffs' bundle options bring together two canisters in a choice of three colours and two of the four sizes available. The two-litre

canister is ideal for treats, while the four-litre holds 2kg of kibble, and the 12-litre up to 6kg.

● **Key feature:** The Scruffs Cantina range is recyclable and BPA-free, so canisters don't contaminate food with chemicals that are harmful to pets — unlike many plastic containers.

● **Colours:** Cream, light grey, dark grey.

● **Prices and sizes:** Scruffs Cantina Pet Food & Treat Sets: £26.99 (two-litre and four-litre); £34.99 (two-litre and seven-litre); £37.99 (two-litre and 12-litre). The four-litre, seven-litre, and 12-litre canisters include a scoop.

● **Available from:** www.petslovescruffs.com



BARRIER CONTROL

Prevent your dog escaping through the front door, upstairs, or from a particular room, thanks to this clever, portable internal gate system.

The Dog-G8 has been devised by Horsham-based owner and pet-sitter Peter Maxted to protect against dogs escaping from the house or being stolen.

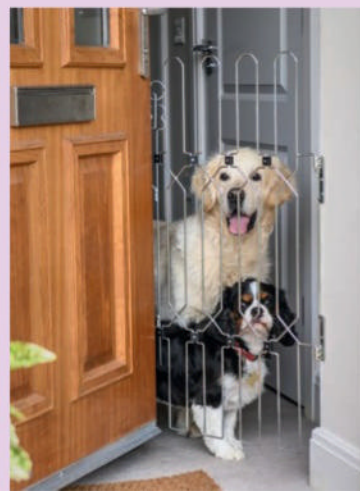
Featuring a concertina, modular, and retractable design, the Dog-G8 has been created with all breeds in mind and can even fit wide openings, such as patio doors.

Made from mild steel, this strong and durable gate folds flat and can be easily stored when not in use.

● **Key feature:** Incredibly versatile, the Dog-G8 is suitable for a range of situations and configurations, ranging from the front or back door, to stairways and hallways, and motorhomes and horse-boxes.

● **Cost:** From £62.95.

● **Available from:** www.dog-g8.com



A RAW DEAL

Hampshire-based award-winning raw dog food producer Paleo Ridge is encouraging owners to switch to raw feeding by sampling its new value-for-money range.

Hypo-allergenic and high in protein, Paleo Ridge Essentials is specially formulated to provide dogs with all the benefits of raw feeding while improving customer access to affordable, high-quality raw food.

Minced to a chunky consistency, each Essentials meal contains 80 per cent high-welfare meat, bone, and offal, and 20 per cent seasonal vegetables.

● **Key feature:** Delivered to Paleo Ridge's exacting welfare, environmental, and ethical standards, the Essentials range offers premium, nutritious raw dog food for all life stages, from puppies to seniors, at a sensible price.

● **Flavours:** Chicken, lamb, beef, turkey, pork, and duck.

● **Price:** £2.19 per 500g pack.

● **Available from:** www.paleoridge.co.uk/shop-raw/essentials



Made in Denmark, Orbiloc's lightweight, impact-resistant safety lights are durable, 100 per cent waterproof, and can be seen from up to 5km away in low light conditions. The Orbiloc range also comes complete with a service kit containing two replacement batteries.

● **Key feature:** Able to withstand extreme conditions, the Orbiloc Dual Safety Light boasts up to 100 hours of battery when on steady and 250 hours when flashing.

● **Colours:** Yellow, red, blue, white, green, turquoise, pink, dark, amber, and purple — perfect for distinguishing between different dogs at a distance in the dark.

● **Price:** £23.99.

● **Available from:** Independent pet specialists and Amazon.



A BRIGHT IDEA

Keep track of your dog on early morning or late evening walks, with the Orbiloc Dual Safety Light.

These high-quality LED safety lights can be attached easily to collars, harnesses, or outdoor clothing, thanks to a range of compatible multi-purpose accessories, such as carabiners, straps, and clips.

HAND IN HAND

Natural pet-care brand WildWash has teamed up with canine fashion company Doffle Dog to launch a handy product for owners.

The new WildWash x Doffle Defence Gel with lead clip is perfect for keeping dog walkers' hands dirt- and germ-free on the go.

Small enough to clip onto your dog's lead, this antibacterial gel contains natural alcohol made from beetroot, along with a purifying blend of organic aloe vera, tea tree, and eucalyptus.

This all-natural formulation leaves hands clean and fresh with no sticky residue.

● **Key feature:** The WildWash x Doffle Defence Gel with lead clip kills 99.9 per cent of bacteria.

● **Price:** £6.95.

● **Available from:** www.wildwash.co.uk



JOINT EFFORT

Owners seeking a supplement to help support their dog's joints, bones, and digestive health, should look no further than Innopaw Green Lipped Mussel.

Containing 100 per cent pure and high-grade green lipped mussel powder derived from crustaceans in New Zealand, these sprinkle capsules provide a rich source of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, antioxidants, omega 3 fatty acids, and glycosaminoglycan.

● **Key feature:** This 100 per cent natural joint supplement for dogs has been responsibly sourced from unpolluted waters and contains no fillers or binders.

● **Price:** From £11.69 (for 90 sprinkle capsules).

● **Available from:** www.innopure.com/products/green-lipped-mussel-for-dogs



PUPPY PROTECTION!

House-train your puppy while protecting your carpets, courtesy of Lancashire-based pet accessory start-up, Accidents Happen.

After identifying a gap in the market when puppy pads proved unsuccessful with his Cocker Spaniel pup, banking industry project manager John Blezard and his business partner and brother-in-law, Chris Clayton, created a unique carpet protector.

Easy to lay, this pet-specific carpet protector film guards against stains from puppy accidents by covering your whole carpet or any area your dog has access to.

● **Key feature:** Hailed as the only pet-focused carpet protector film on the market, Carpet Protector from Accidents Happen is already proving popular with breeders and puppy owners.

● **Cost:** £18.99 for a single roll.

● **Available from:** www.accidents-happen.co.uk



Jim the WONDER DOG

When it comes to extraordinary tales, few can equal that of Jim, a dog of many talents.

The world may have marvelled at Paul the octopus's uncanny ability to predict the outcome of Germany's football world cup games in 2010, but it was nothing compared to the spectacular successes of Jim the Wonder Dog nearly nine decades earlier.

Born in 1925, the Llewellyn Setter not only picked out the winner of the US Kentucky Derby seven years running, but predicted the winner of the US presidential race and the baseball world series in 1936. He was also able to foretell the sex of unborn babies — and that was just for starters.

Jim's talents weren't immediately obvious. The runt of the litter, he wasn't expected to amount to anything much, and while his six siblings soon found homes, no one expressed any interest in Jim until he was bought at half price by a friend of Sam Van Arsdale, who gifted Sam the pup as a joke. Nevertheless, as soon as Jim was old enough, Van Arsdale thought he'd give him a chance, and sent him to a kennel for training as a hunting dog. Jim however, declined to join in and simply sat in the shade watching the other dogs working instead. The trainer returned him to Van Arsdale, telling him that Jim was living up to

expectations, in that he was worthless as a hunting dog. Luckily Van Arsdale decided against giving Jim away. Swayed by his sweet nature and 'riveting, human-like eyes' he thought he would do just fine as a pet instead.

On impulse, he took Jim along with him for company on a hunting trip one day, not expecting him to do much more than take a nap. To his surprise, Jim performed like the perfect hunting dog, behaving as though he'd been doing it all his life. He'd obviously been taking more on board at the training kennels than anyone realised, and in fact turned out to be so good he was acclaimed as 'The Hunting Dog of the Century' by 'Outdoor Life' magazine.

SOMETHING SPECIAL

It was while out hunting one day that Jim first demonstrated he was even more special than anyone suspected. The weather was warm, and Van Arsdale suggested to Jim that they take a break in the shade of a nearby hickory tree. Jim promptly went and sat beneath it. Thinking it a fluke, Van Arsdale jokingly asked Jim to show him an oak tree. To his astonishment, Jim went straight to it, and when asked, correctly located

"Jim wasn't expected to amount to anything much..."



Right: The Jim the Wonder Dog Memorial Garden in Marshall, Missouri.
Image: Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported licence/Americasroof.

Right: Thanks to his extraordinary abilities, Jim became a national treasure.

Image: Courtesy of Missouri State Archives and Friends of Jim the Wonder Dog.

Far right: Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan poses beside a statue of Jim the Wonder Dog in the four-legged wonder's memorial garden.

Image: Courtesy of Missouri State Archives.



“The professors shook their heads in bafflement...”

a walnut, a cedar, a stump, and a hazel bush.

More than a little amazed, Van Arsdale returned home and asked Jim to pick out different makes and colours of cars, which he did without mistake or hesitation. A few curious people gathered to watch, and Jim correctly identified a man with a moustache, one wearing a suit, and a woman with a baby. It was to be the start of a career that astonished all who saw him. As his reputation spread and droves of curiosity seekers flocked to witness his remarkable gift, so Jim's mysterious abilities grew. He would pick out people based on their jobs or what was in their pockets; if told the number of a car licence plate he would unfailingly locate it — and even more astonishingly, he could replicate the feat when the number was written on a piece of paper which he wasn't shown. Although Van Arsdale spoke only English, Jim would also respond to requests shouted out by his audience in Greek, Spanish, German, Italian, and on one occasion, even correctly interpreted Morse Code.

Even though Jim appeared able to reliably predict the outcome of all manner of future events and sporting fixtures, Van Arsdale refused to benefit personally by placing bets. Neither did he show any desire to profit from Jim's uncanny abilities, turning down a lucrative offer of \$665,000 for a movie deal, and never charging for any of his demonstrations or shows. This rather detracted from the claims of those who said the dog was a hoax, since Van Arsdale gained nothing from it, commenting: “I feel that Jim's powers are beyond my comprehension, and I do not wish to commercialise on them in any way.”

Indeed, Jim's mysterious abilities so baffled his owner that in an attempt to discover more, faculty members, students, psychiatrists, and top veterinary surgeons from Washington University, St Louis, and the University of Missouri were invited to watch a demonstration. The head of the school of veterinary medicine, Dr Durant, began proceedings by giving Jim a thorough physical examination, and was unable to find anything abnormal or different from any other dog. He was then given

a succession of directions, in a number of different languages, and calmly achieved all the tasks successfully. The professors shook their heads in bafflement and unable to detect any trickery, or find evidence that Van Arsdale was somehow cueing Jim, declared that he “possessed an occult power that might never come again to a dog in many generations.”

Jim was also invited to demonstrate his powers before the Missouri Legislature, following which the Governor of Missouri signed a bill officially making him ‘Missouri's Wonder Dog’. With insurance against accident of \$100,000, he was probably also the most valuable.

Jim continued to amaze all who met him until just eight days after his twelfth birthday in 1937, when he accompanied Van Arsdale for what was intended to be a relaxing fishing trip together. On arriving at their destination, he bounded out of the car and ran off a short distance before suddenly collapsing. Van Arsdale picked him up and rushed him to the nearest veterinary hospital but Jim died just after arriving.

NEVER FORGOTTEN

Jim had become something of a national treasure, and when news of his passing was learned, it led to a vast outpouring of grief across the country. Van Arsdale was no less devastated himself, and because he considered Jim one of the family, tried to arrange for him to be buried in the family plot at Ridge Park Cemetery. When the local authorities refused to give permission, Jim was buried instead in a specially made casket just outside the cemetery gates.

Although it's now been 86 years since Jim passed away, he's not been forgotten. A special garden and museum created on the site of the old Ruff Hotel in Marshall where he lived helps to keep his memory alive, and each year the town hosts a special Wonder Dog Day. And as for Jim's final resting place, ironically, with the expansion of the cemetery over time, his grave does now reside within its boundaries. It is, say caretakers, the most frequently visited, and is seldom without flowers and coins adorning it.

When a stranger calls...

Many fearful dogs feel stressed when visitors come to their home. How do you manage this and keep both them and your dog safe? Animal behaviourist **Toni Shelbourne** has some useful tips.



TONI SHELBOURNE has over three decades of experience working with dogs and wild canids. She is an animal behaviourist (full member of INTODogs and ICAN), a Tellington TTouch instructor, real dog yoga instructor, and author. She lives in Oxfordshire. For more information, visit www.tonishelbourne.co.uk

It's not uncommon for dogs to reactive negatively to strangers. Your dog may be a rescue who in the past has had a scary experience around humans; many lockdown puppies didn't have the benefit of seeing other humans outside of their core family to accustom them to outsiders; or your dog may have become frightened or overwhelmed by a visitor's behaviour. There are many things that can go wrong and frighten

a young, impressionable dog, so take care if you know your dog is cautious.

SIGNS OF WARINESS CAN BE WIDE RANGING AND NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS. INDICATORS YOUR DOG ISN'T HAPPY MIGHT INCLUDE:

- Backing off.
- Panting.
- Freezing.
- Barking.
- Looking worried.

- Cowering or rolling on his back to expose his belly.
- Yawning, eye averting, licking the nose, and blinking (calming signals).
- Not allowing humans to touch him.
- Becoming overexcited.
- Growling.
- Air snapping, nipping, or biting.
- Lunging.
- Reacting when visitors move around... and many more.



Right: Many dogs are concerned about meeting strangers at the front door.

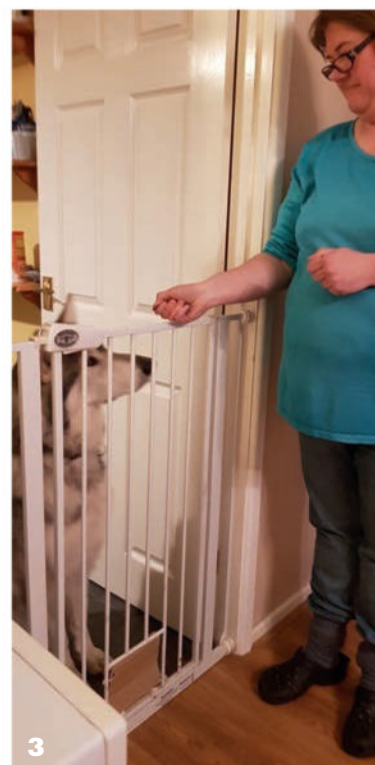
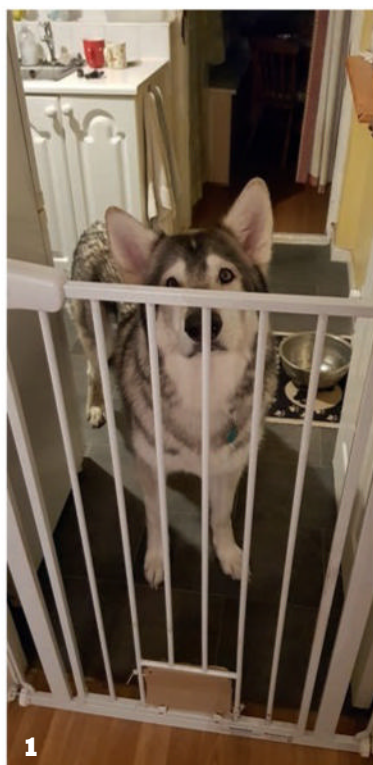
1 Let your dog see a visitor arriving from behind the barrier.

2 Feed him a tasty treat.

3 Repeat this until he is calm or your visitor is settled.

Images: Louise Lincoln.

TOP TIP!
If a workman comes to fix something and your dog is never going to meet that person again, it is best not to introduce them.



“It’s not uncommon for dogs to reactive negatively to strangers.”

Some of these signs are obvious but watch for the little clues — calming signals, eye expression, or breath rate changes — these are often missed and people assume their dog is fine, until he seemingly bites a visitor without warning.

If your dog does exhibit anxiety take care to protect both parties; the law means an incident within your home, including in your garden, could result in legal action against you.

FIRST STEP

The first vital step is management of the situation. You want to ensure both dog and human feel safe so set them up for success by having a fail-safe system in place for keeping them apart. This is especially important as visitors arrive and leave.

DOOR ROUTINE

I would strongly suggest that dogs, even those comfortable around people, never greet visitors at the front door; too many things can go wrong. It’s often a small space so your dog can feel crowded, and it’s busy as people move around,

chatting, hugging, and removing coats. People then often step towards your dog as they walk up the hallway or into another room, which your dog may perceive as threatening. Similarly, he could get trapped in a small space and feel unable to retreat, flipping to the fear response of fight instead of withdrawing.

Use barriers to create airlocks between the two parties. These can be permanent baby gates across a doorway, or temporary free-standing barriers for when you

need them. I often find dogs prefer to be near their family member for support and so you can perform some positive association training when people arrive. However, it’s safer for all if your dog is contained nearby. If you lock him in a room out of sight, he may become more upset, barking and scratching to get out.

Practise him going to his safe place when nobody is visiting. You can pair the doorbell or knocker with going to his designated area when no visitors are present, so it becomes a familiar routine.

Have a pot of high-value treats by your door so you are ready for real visitors. As the person enters, throw

Right: A safe zone is also useful for when deliveries arrive.



HOME VISITS

Right: Don't forget to think about safe zones for your garden. Many dogs are overwhelmed in the summer at garden parties. You can see this dog is struggling.

Below right: If your dog is loose around strangers, it might be wise to muzzle him for everyone's piece of mind.

TOP TIP!

If you can offer your dog the scent of your guest before he sees him, it can help him calm down and sets up a positive association.

If your dog likes to hide, a crate set up near you and away from the main exit from the room can be a reassuring safe space for when you need to manage guests in the house.



a handful of treats to your dog or feed him in rapid succession if you are near enough. Don't worry if he gives a little bark as he sees the person, throw the treats away from the gate and see if he will go and eat them. If he doesn't, it shows that he is overwhelmed so increase the distance between him and your guest.

SHARING SPACE

Other safe zones can be utilised within the main entertainment area. Rooms can often be divided with puppy panels so you and your dog can be in one half and visitors in the other. Set it up so your visitor has access to a bathroom and the front door if you can, and your dog has access away from the person and, if possible, to an outdoor space so he can choose how close he wants to be to the stranger(s). At first, he will most likely need you with him inside the safe zone, but this might not always be possible.

Again, practice makes perfect, so it is worthwhile helping him get used to being in his safe zone, or in another room, so that it is familiar for when you need it. Once he can settle on his bed with a chew or enrichment toy with you in the area with him, try being just the other side of the barrier, then a bit further away. This process may take a few

weeks to achieve, and you may have to go back to stage one when you pair it with people in the room. Take your time to get this stage right and support your dog as much as he needs.

If dividing a room isn't feasible, once everyone is settled and you have checked your guest is comfortable helping you work with your dog, you can bring him in on a harness and lead — but only if you have enough space to ensure that he is comfortable and your guest will be safe. Again, have some very yummy treats with you. Ask your guest to sit quietly with a quarter turn away from you both so he doesn't stare at your dog. He can also offer a calming signal — yawning or looking away — to help your dog settle. At no time should your guest get up or reach towards your dog.

Each time your dog glances in your guest's direction say a word like 'YES' or 'GOOD', then feed a treat but ask him to look back at you for the reward. If he doesn't automatically look back to you, place the treat near his nose and slowly lure him to turn away. If he can't do this or won't eat, you are too close so take him back out or work at a bigger distance.

Don't do this exercise for very long as it will be very tiring for your



dog plus you need time to enjoy socialising without worrying about his behaviour. Your dog may be happy chilling in a different room or with a family member elsewhere.

MUZZLE IF NEEDED

Muzzles can be important for visitors' and for your peace of mind; this is especially true if your guest is staying for an extended period, or you are introducing someone into your family circle who may need to interact with your dog regularly. It can be the next careful stage in getting everyone comfortable around each other but is an added safety measure if someone gets it wrong and puts your dog in a difficult position.

As with all the other tools, you need to introduce a muzzle slowly and carefully. Ask a behaviourist or trainer to help



Above: If you can, create a space for your dog or dogs within or in view of the main living area. This can help all concerned feel more comfortable.

Below: Be creative when setting up a safe zone for your dog. It could be a pen within the room or you could divide the whole room in half.

you if you are struggling with this.

TIPS FOR MANAGING PEOPLE

Safety comes down to you setting everyone up for success. This check list gives you some handy tips to help you manage interactions but is not exhaustive; look at your situation and plan for success.

- Tell your visitors beforehand what you expect of them and check they are comfortable with the rules.
- Never allow a guest to approach or touch your dog; it has to be the dog's choice to interact.
- Even if your dog does go near to and sniffs a guest, visitors

“Safety comes down to you setting everyone up for success. Tell your visitors what you expect of them...”

shouldn't assume they can then touch him.

● Do not give your guest treats to feed your dog. This puts him in conflict; he wants the treat but is fearful of the person. Most people also follow through by reaching out to the dog after the treat is taken, something you don't want to encourage.

● Ask your visitor not to give direct eye contact.

● If your guest needs to use the bathroom or is about to leave, ask him to tell you so you can support your dog by either removing him to another part of the house or treating him for calmly looking at your guest without reacting.

● Ask your visitors to be calm and quiet in their voices and manners but not to be too 'weird' as this can confuse and upset some dogs.

THE NEXT STAGE

If your dog is fearful and has either shown aggression or wariness of strangers it is imperative to seek professional help if you want to

progress beyond the management tips I have listed in this article. So many people misunderstand a dog's communication and the dog often gets the blame for a bite incident.

DECOMPRESS

Help your dog decompress after your visitors leave; he will have been stressed and may be more tired than usual so allow him time and space to sleep. This will help him process his emotions and recover. However, before sleeping, he will benefit from some fun to help shake off the negative or difficult experience — some scent work or a game of tug, a nice sniffy walk in a quiet environment, a cuddle with you, or whatever he enjoys most.

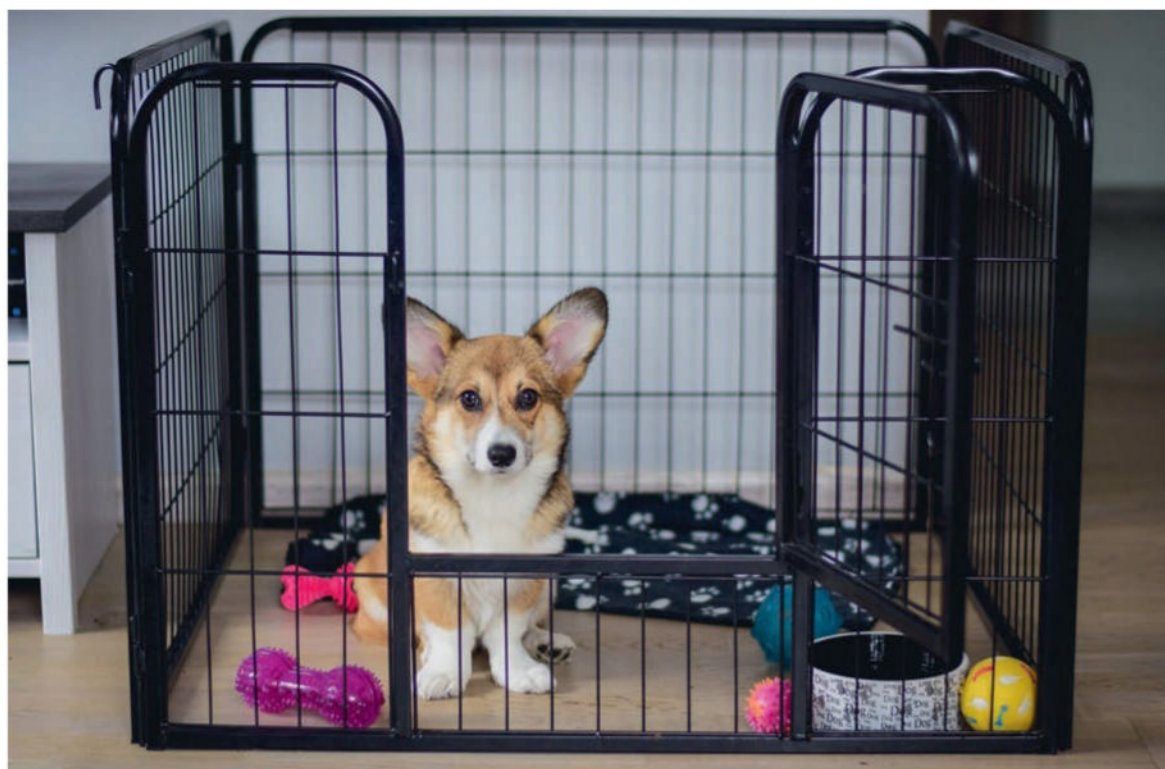
AND FINALLY...

Above all consider how he may feel about strangers invading his space and try to understand his point of view; we are not all social butterflies, and neither are all dogs. It is absolutely OK if he doesn't interact with everyone he meets.

TOP TIP!

Need help?

Look for a professional listed under the Dog Behaviour & Training Charter; www.dogcharter.uk so you know the behaviourist only uses kind and up-to-date methods.



A good read

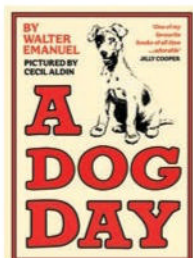
Nothing beats a good book, especially when it's all about dogs!

"...make yourself comfortable with your dog beside you..."

Right: Find your favourite reading spot and relax with your dog.

March may be the month that heralds the arrival of spring but it can still be a bit chilly! That's the perfect time to make yourself comfortable in a nice, warm sitting room with your dog beside you and a good book on your lap — what could be better?

Check out these dog-themed reads...



A DOG DAY

by Walter Emanuel with illustrations by Cecil Aldin

- Price: £8.99 hardback.
- Published by: Souvenir Press.
- Available from: All good book shops and online retailers.

This is a new edition of a canine classic (first published in 1902), featuring a day in the life of a naughty but lovable terrier, as told by the dog himself. Our hero gets up to all sorts of tricks, and wreaks

havoc on the Brown household as he tries to kill a fur rug, takes on the family cat, and steals anything edible he can lay his paws on! But somehow he always seems to get off scot-free.

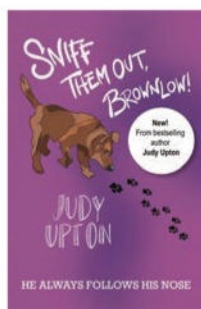
Walter Emanuel was a well-known author and satirist whose work was featured in 'Punch' magazine, where he had a weekly column, but 'A dog day' was his most enduring work.

The artist Cecil Aldin began his working life as a magazine

illustrator, but soon became famous for his portrayal of dogs in particular, and his original artworks are now highly prized by collectors.

Aldin was widely praised because his illustrations 'captured the very soul of a dog'. This classic book appeals to both children and adults, who admire the wit and humour in the writing and illustrations.

It's definitely one you'll want to keep forever.



SNIFF THEM OUT, BROWNLOW!

by Judy Upton

- Price: £9.99 paperback.
- Published by: Hobart Books.
- Available from: All book shops or online retailers; also available as an e-book on Kindle.

If you're a fan of cosy crime thrillers, this could be the book for you.

Highly topical, it introduces the reader to Sophie Gorrage and her trained sniffer dog, Brownlow, who work as pet detectives, tracking down lost animals and returning them to their grateful owners.

However, when the dogs of a reality TV star are snatched from a Sussex common, and then a chart-topping rapper reveals his dog has been taken after a carjacking in east London, it looks like Sophie and Brownlow are on the trail of a serial dognapper and the stakes are raised.

Sophie needs all her deductive skills and Brownlow his first-class nose as they attempt to discover who is stealing the dogs, where they are taking them, and why.

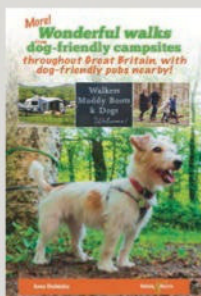
As the story races along at a brisk pace, the danger intensifies until

the lives of both human and dog are put at risk.

Although light-hearted in tone (and no animals come to any harm), the book does make serious points about responsible ownership and the inadequate response of the legal system to dog theft.

Following the successful launch of the book, there is a sequel in the pipeline.

In the meantime, 'Sniff them out, Brownlow!' is one to enjoy curled up on the sofa with your dog beside you.



MORE WONDERFUL WALKS FROM DOG-FRIENDLY CAMPSITES WITH DOG-FRIENDLY PUBS NEARBY!

by Anna Chelmicka

- Price: £16.99 paperback.
- Published by: Hubble & Hattie.
- Available from: Book shops (some may stock it or it can be ordered), or direct from Hubble & Hattie; www.hubbleandhattie.com

If you are planning to enjoy more outings with your dog now that the weather is improving, this handy, comprehensive guide to walks, campsites, and pubs — all dog-friendly — could be just what you need.

Author Anna Chelmicka has travelled around Britain and Europe

in her motorhome, finding walks and exploring the countryside. Accompanying her have been her dogs — first Ruby, then her daughter Amber, and now Pearl.

As well as offering lots of practical advice on everything from respecting the countryside to what to take with you, the book identifies campsites across Britain, all located close to footpaths and walking trails, and near dog-friendly pubs. Details about the campsites include any special facilities for dogs and they are reviewed by Pearl.

As well as identifying the distinctive characteristics of each area, the book contains detailed instructions of walks from the campsites, of varying lengths and with marked routes, so you can choose the most appropriate

for you and your dog.

In total the book features 23 campsites with detailed instructions for 46 walks.

When Anna started travelling with Ruby in her motorhome, following her retirement after 30 years of teaching, she quickly discovered how little information was available about camping with dogs. This was her inspiration for this book and its predecessor 'Wonderful walks from dog-friendly campsites throughout the UK'.

She comments: "We have discovered some amazing places, especially while researching my previous book. It made me realise just how special the British landscape is, and how fortunate we are to be able to access so much of it."



ALL IN THE FAMILY! FUR, HAIR AND FEATHERS LIVING TOGETHER

by Norm Mort

- Price: £9.99 paperback.
- Published by: Hubble & Hattie.
- Available from: Book shops (some may stock it or it can be ordered), or direct from Hubble & Hattie; www.hubbleandhattie.com

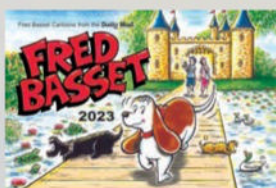
Author Norm Mort is a freelance automotive writer for magazines

and newspapers in Canada, but he's also an animal lover, who has a variety of pets, and has written books about travelling with pets and living with a pet menagerie.

'All in the family!' explores the benefits and challenges of living with an assortment of animals and could be a worthwhile read if you're thinking of taking the plunge. There are interviews with multi-pet families who share their experiences, including a look at

day-to-day life in a multi-pet household, advice on species compatibility, combinations of pets that are best avoided, problem solving, and introducing new pets into the family.

The book is illustrated throughout with images of all sorts of different combinations of pets, and highlights that it might not be right for everyone or every pet but multi-pet households can be the source of love, fun, and laughter!



FRED BASSET YEARBOOK 2023

by Alex Graham

- Price: £9.99 paperback.
- Published by: Summersdale.
- Available from: Amazon, Waterstones, and other online booksellers.

Fred Basset first appeared on the pages of the 'Daily Mail' in July 1963 and quickly made himself a household name — an accolade he has retained for

more than half a century, attracting readers from all over the world.

The creator of Fred Basset was cartoonist Alex Graham whose work appeared in numerous publications including 'Tatler', 'The New Yorker' and 'Punch'. When asked by the 'Daily Mail' to create a new cartoon strip, Fred was the result. Nearly six decades after his debut, Fred and his friends continue to entertain readers with their many adventures and light-hearted mischief. Fred's gentle humour, shrewd observation of the

world, and wry look on life makes him a hugely popular character and a great source of amusement and comfort.

Alex Graham died in 1991 and the strip is continued by his daughter Arran and artist Michael Martin. The 2023 Yearbook is classic Fred and an essential read for fans.

Below: Nothing beats a good read.





Dog Answers

Tips and advice from some of the top names in the dog world.

THE EXPERT PANEL



TAM SIN DURSTON
is a canine behaviour officer in Dogs Trust's canine behaviour and research team.



TONY CRUSE
is a member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and the Institute of Modern Dog Trainers.



VICKY PAYNE
BVetMed, MRCVS is a holistic vet based in East Sussex.



HOLLY MASH
BVSc, MRCVS specialises in herbal medicine, acupuncture, and nutrition.



JOANNE ANGUS
LCGI is a founder member of the Guild of Master Groomers.



JOHN BURNS
BVMS, MRCVS is a vet, and founder of feed company Burns Pet Nutrition.



STEPHEN JENKINSON
is access adviser to Your Dog, the Kennel Club, and local councils.

HEALTH

VET PRESCRIBED

Q Is it OK to give my dog paracetamol?
Chris Logan, Merseyside.



VICKY SAYS:

Paracetamol should only be used in dogs under veterinary supervision to ensure it is given at a safe and effective dose. Vets may prescribe paracetamol to reduce fevers, as supplementary pain control after surgery, or for dogs with long-term painful conditions. Paracetamol is toxic to dogs if given in excess and can cause kidney, liver, and blood problems. Dogs prescribed long-term paracetamol will need regular blood tests.



Right: Paracetamol should only be given to your dog under veterinary supervision.



Dog insurance call 03300 243 990

DID YOU KNOW?

Dew claws are found on the inside of your dog's front legs. A few breeds also have dew claws on their back legs.

HEALTH GET IT NAILED!

Q My dog has very long claws, despite him having them trimmed by my groomer every few weeks. I've noticed that he chews at them too, although they don't seem to cause him discomfort. What problems can long claws cause?

Mary Lofthouse, Warwickshire.



VICKY SAYS: Without seeing a picture of your dog it is hard to assess if his nails are too long. Different types of dog have different shaped feet and claws. Sight hounds and Lurchers have a 'hare foot', which is quite long and flat with forward pointing nails that act like running spikes at speed. Gundog breeds tend towards a 'cat foot', which is rounder with shorter nails, and some breeds like Boxers and Pugs tend towards very short, downward-pointing nails. The tip of the nail should just touch the



ground when the dog is standing and won't make much of a noise when walking on hard ground. Long nails can cause pain if they curl around and grow into the pads. This is most common in breeds with an upright foot like Pugs but can also happen with dew claws,

especially back dew claws. Long nails can also cause discomfort in the foot by altering pressure on the toes; this is something I often see in older dogs who need more regular nail trimming as they don't walk as much, or arthritis may alter how their nails wear.

Right: A dog's feet and claws vary depending on his breed or type...

BEHAVIOUR NEEDING ATTENTION

Q My 12-year-old cross-breed has started barking at me if he wants more food, when he needs to go outside to toilet, and if he wants me to throw a toy for him! He never did this before. At the moment I just ignore him and eventually he gives up and settles down. What might be the reason for this and is there anything I can do to prevent this behaviour?

Olivia Martin, Shropshire.



TAMSIN SAYS: Making sure your dog has plenty of opportunity for comfy sleep, time with you, appropriate exercise, sniffing opportunities, and is on an age-appropriate balanced diet is always helpful. Older dogs can also experience age-related changes meaning they need activities such as sleep, food, play, and interaction, at different times. Whenever any dog starts behaving in a new way, especially older dogs, book a vet check to rule out any medical changes, like increased hunger, and/or pain which might be contributing to this. For example, an older dog with a more desperate need to toilet now might begin barking to communicate this urgency, whereas previously he might have been able to wait until taken out at his owner's convenience. Owners tend to always respond to barking, because it's so noisy, so dogs very quickly learn it's a successful way to get our immediate attention and bring about what they had hoped for. However, ignoring him might make him frustrated or worried, and you miss an opportunity to connect and provide him with something he needs, like toileting. It sounds as though he's communicating specifically that he needs you to engage. To help discover why, keep a diary for a few days of when he does this and what you believe he needs or wants from you. This will also be useful information for your vet. Use this information to plan toileting opportunities regularly and consider rationing his daily food amount across more meals throughout the day — with your vet's guidance.



Right: Sometimes a dog barks because he's trying to tell you he needs something...

HEALTH NAVEL GAZING

Q Do dogs have a belly button?

Julia Mackenzie, London.



VICKY SAYS: Yes! But it doesn't look like ours. Every mammal will have a small scar where the umbilical cord entered during gestation. In dogs, the hole in the body wall closes soon after birth and the umbilical cord dries up and drops off in a few days leaving a small, flat scar. Next time your dog is relaxed and enjoying a belly rub you might be able to find the scar. Sometimes a bit of fat pokes through the hole in the body wall before it closes, which leaves a little blob of fat like an 'outy' belly button. In some dogs the body wall does not close fully leaving a hernia. Very small hernias are unlikely to cause any problems, but larger ones risk trapping a loop of gut and should be repaired when a puppy is old enough.

Right top: A small puppy with a hernia is examined by the vet.

Right bottom: This picture of a puppy's tummy shows a small scar where the umbilical cord entered the body.



BEHAVIOUR SNAPPY WITH STRANGERS

Q My dog (who is eight years old) is fine with dogs he's known since he was a puppy but can be aggressive towards those he doesn't know. This hasn't always been the case, but I know he has been slightly anxious all his life even though he was well-socialised as a puppy. How can I help him? I now keep him on-lead whenever we meet a strange dog, as often I cannot tell if he will get snappy or think this new dog is his best friend.

Laura Carter, Derbyshire.



TAMSIN SAYS: Dogs are likely to feel safer around others whose behaviour they can foretell, so they can struggle with the unpredictability of new dogs, especially when on-lead and unable to avoid them. And for some dogs who want to greet others, barking and lunging can express the frustration of not being able to do so while on-lead.

Some dogs lunge and bark at others when physically sore, because previous unsolicited interaction from another dog might have hurt, and they might anticipate this happening again with other unfamiliar dogs.

It's worth your vet ruling out pain or medical reasons and referring you to an accredited clinical animal behaviourist. They will help you teach your dog to feel and behave differently when exposed to new dogs — such as turning immediately to you, or tucking himself safely behind you. They'll also help identify whether he's worried about other dogs, or perhaps frustrated by being on-lead and unable to behave as he wishes, or a mixture of both.

Meanwhile, always carry treats and whenever you see a new dog from a distance don't wait for your dog to react. Instead act first, calmly and quietly turning away, crossing over the road if necessary, giving them a wide berth and passing at a safe distance, so your dog doesn't need to begin barking or lunging towards them. Keep feeding him treats while he's calm, quiet, and relaxed and lead him past at a distance at which he can remain relaxed. Professional support from a behaviourist will be hugely helpful!

Below: Some dogs feel unsure about meeting strange dogs because they are unpredictable.



HEALTH READING THE SIGNS

Q What are the symptoms of gum disease in dogs?

Terry Farmer, Suffolk.



VICKY SAYS: The first signs will be a reddening and swelling of the gingiva (gum) closest to the tooth. As gum disease progresses, the gingiva will start to bleed when the dog chews. The gum can start to recede from the tooth leaving pockets which fill with plaque and food, leading to a foul smell. As gum recession gets worse, the tooth roots become exposed which can be very painful and may lead to tooth loss and dental abscesses.



Right: Check your dog's teeth regularly for signs of gum disease.

BEHAVIOUR BETTER CONNECTED

Q Why does my dog totally ignore me (some of the time) but sticks to my partner like glue and does everything he asks? My partner says it's because I don't have an air of authority and I don't make her feel safe (she's a rescue). Watching him with her, I can see that he is very calm and relaxed, but firm and consistent

in his commands without being intimidating. Is it just that some people are naturally good with dogs and I'm not? Is there anything I can do to improve our relationship?

Helen Steward, Wiltshire.

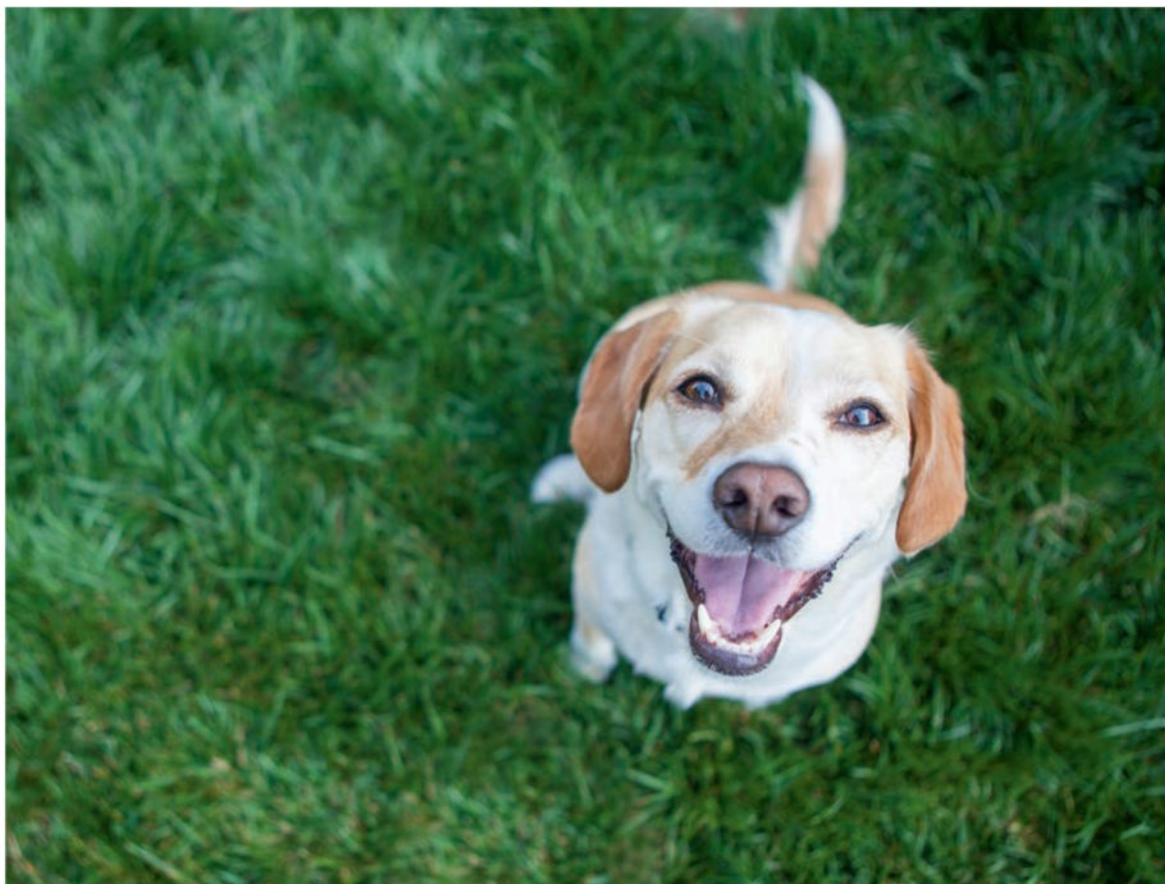


TAMSIN SAYS: It's wonderful that you want to boost your relationship with your

Below: Some dogs are drawn to people who make them feel safe.



dog and there are plenty of lovely ways to do this. Remember every person and dog are unique, so the relationship between you and your dog can never be the same as that between your partner and your dog, so comparing isn't fair! We know dogs feel safe when they can predict what will happen and when, so generally enjoy structure to their daily routine. This can mean they naturally gravitate to people they perceive behaving in a consistently predictable, and commonly calm, relaxed, and confident manner. We also know that, as well as genetic influences, the way dogs behave is heavily based on what they've learned through previous experiences, and with rescue dogs we don't always have the luxury of knowing what they've been exposed to, or not, before. It might be your dog hasn't lived with anyone like you before, however has previous experience of forming bonds with people like your partner, making him a ready point of security — as well as predictable calmness and consistency. But don't let this be a barrier to strengthening your relationship with your dog. To enhance your connection, book training sessions with an accredited instructor. They'll demonstrate how to recognise and meet your dog's individual needs effectively and consistently, as well as interpret her body language and feelings, so you can respond appropriately to help her feel safe no matter what the situation. Routinely enjoying safe, fun, shared experiences will help connect you.



BEHAVIOUR

PUT ON A HAPPY FACE

Q Do dogs smile? I always think my dog is smiling or is it just that he is imitating my expressions?

Lee Hayes, Cheshire.



TAMSIN SAYS: First, let's define 'smile'. If we mean 'widening the mouth to expose teeth, slightly crinkling up the nose and narrowing the eyes, directly towards another living being', then yes, dogs are perfectly capable of doing this. However, smiling at each other is very 'human' behaviour. Dogs tend not to look directly at each other, naturally curving around to sniff each other instead when greeting, because baring teeth commonly communicates growing concern with a situation and a reluctance to interact.

Despite this, living so closely with humans and

being expert body language readers, dogs can learn it's a good thing when we smile at them. They can learn to look back at us with relaxed faces too. Complicatedly though, some dogs have learned to narrow their eyes and bare their teeth when greeting us. A rare occurrence, this is probably habitual behaviour, which at first communicated they felt a bit anxious, but have since learned they needn't worry. For most dogs though, what we consider smiling — baring teeth directly at someone else — is a sign they're worried and need to be given space, not interacted with. However, if by 'smile' you mean 'express pleasure at the sight of another living being', then yes, dogs definitely do this, and in a variety of ways. These include approaching us with soft, relaxed bodies and loose, naturally swishing tails. My dog flaps her ears towards me, almost wagging her whole body, which is her super-cute version of smiling at me!



GOT A PROBLEM WITH YOUR DOG?

Whether it's about behaviour, training, health, or general care, the Your Dog experts are here to help. Our panel includes some of the top names in the dog world, so you can rest assured that you are getting the best quality advice.

Just email your problem/query to editorial@yourdog.co.uk or, if you prefer, you can post it to 'Dog Answers' at our Bourne address (see page 5). You can also post your query on Facebook www.facebook.com/yourdogmagazine.

Above: Dogs have learned to look at us with a relaxed face even though this isn't natural canine behaviour.



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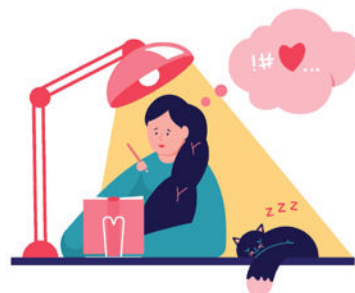
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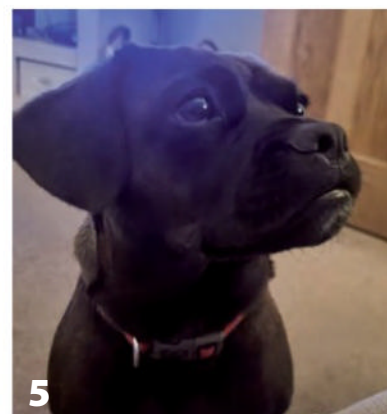
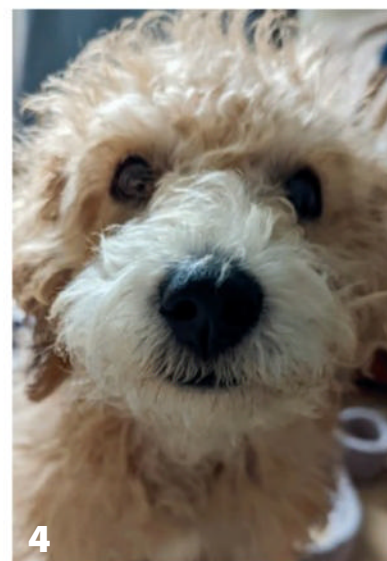
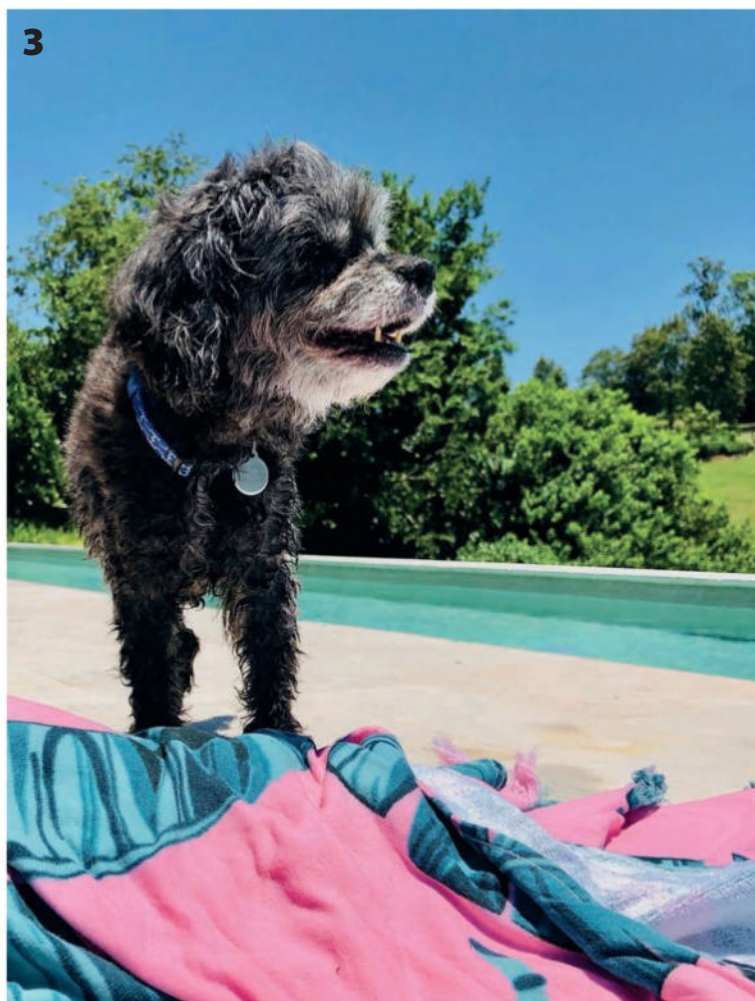
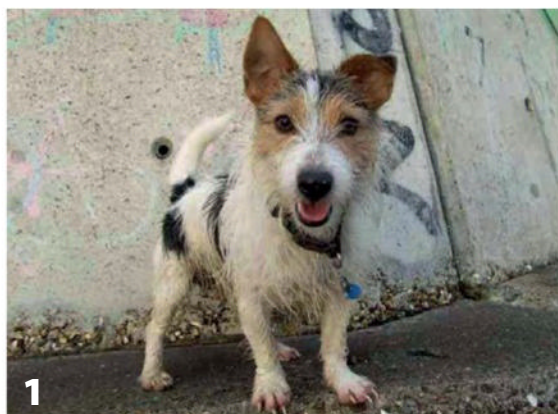
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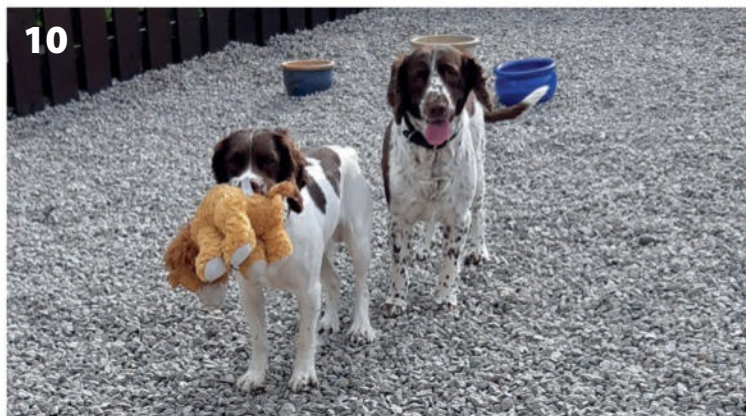
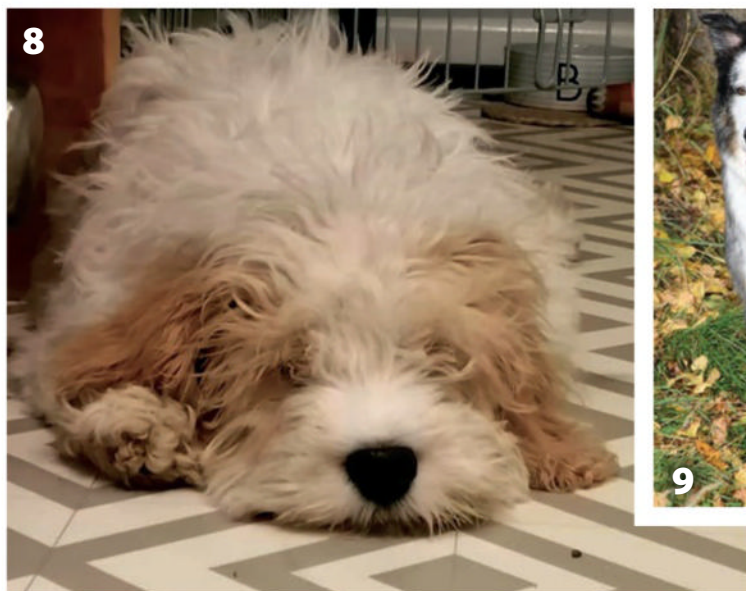
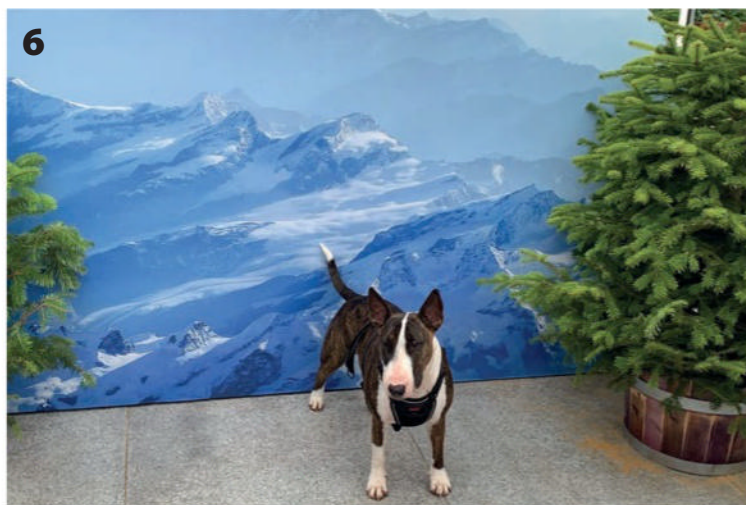


1&2. Rescues Jack Russell Bertie (left) and Jack Russell X Miniature Dachshund Lucy (right), from Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

3. Cavapoo (Cavalier King Charles Spaniel X Poodle) Miss Oxy, from Brookfield, Queensland, Australia.

4. Bedoodle (Bedlington Terrier X Poodle) Teddy, from Bolton, Greater Manchester.

5. French Bulldog X spaniel X Pug Nova, from Chessington, Surrey.



6&7. Bull Terriers Indie (left) and her brother and best friend Albie (right), from Islington, London.

8. Rescue Cavachon (Cavalier King Charles Spaniel X Bichon Frise) Barney, from Telford, Shropshire.

9. Border Collie Storm Shadow, from Worcester.

10. Springer Spaniels Cooper and Hogan, from Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire.

11. German Spitz Bee Bee, from Louth, Lincolnshire.



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